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OLD WEST

A JOE SMALL PUBLICATION

SUMMER, 1969

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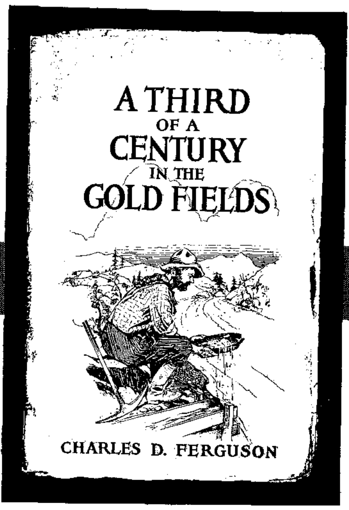
A THIRD OF A CENTURY IN THE GOLD FIELDS
CHARLES D. FERGUSON

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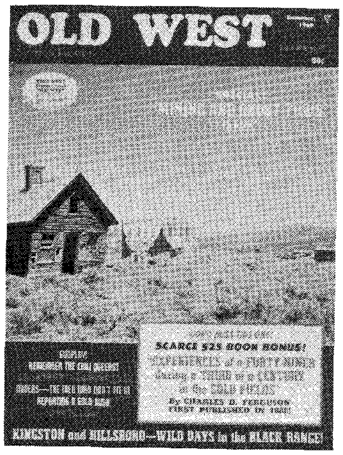
SPECIAL FEATURE!

RARE PHOTOS
OF THE BLACK RANGE!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KINGSTON and HILLSBORO—WILD DAYS in the BLACK RANGE!

Cover Photograph
Hamilton, Nevada
By Ray Atkeson

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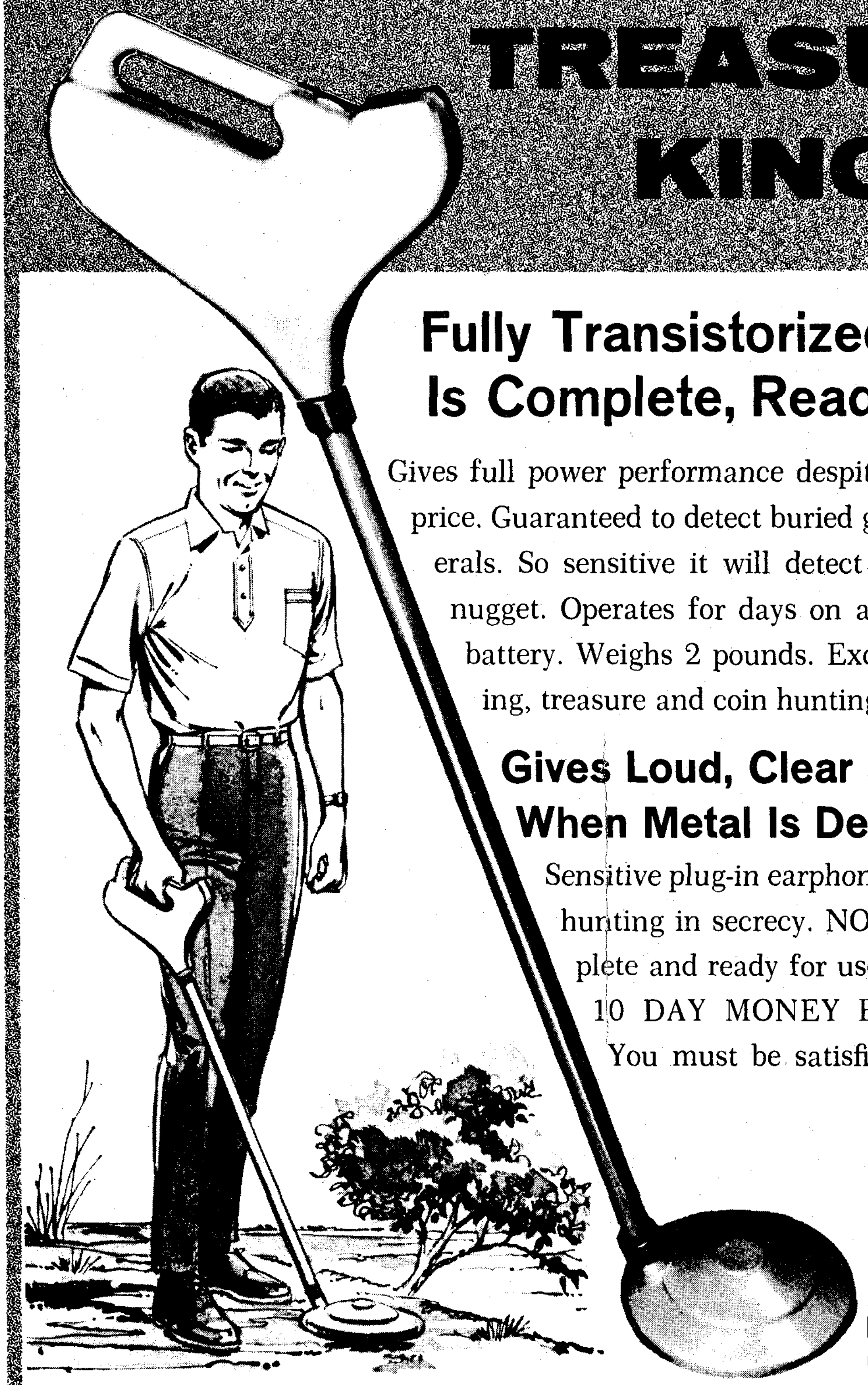

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NEW MEXICO'S TUMULTUOUS

KINGSTON ROARED LIKE A LION!

Several persons deserve credit for these extraordinary rare photographs of Hillsboro and Kingston, New Mexico. Shortly after we published in FRONTIER TIMES back in 1963 a story on three Black Range towns (accompanied by the ghost town variety of photos), we received a letter from William B. Scott of El Paso, Texas telling of his personal collection of about 100 old glass negatives of Hillsboro and Kingston scenes which he had had developed for a yield of almost fifty excellent prints. Mr. Scott graciously consented to our copying his photos for use in a future issue because, in his words, "Your magazines are doing such a fine job publishing stories about our western cultural heritage that I shall be glad to lend them to you."

When we received Jessie Peterson's and Thelma Knoles' stories

By JESSIE PETERSON

Photos Courtesy Author

THE OLD mining town of Kingston is the heart of the Sierra County, New Mexico, mining industry. Its sister town, Lake Valley, had the distinction of having the Bridal Chamber Mine, which produced the richest silver ever. Kingston, however, was known to old-timers as the Gem of the Black Range, producing more silver than any other town in the entire Southwest in addition to a fair share of gold, iron, copper, zinc, galena and talc.

Though the town possessed many famous silver mines, the most fabulous was Solitaire. Nuggets were found from the size of a marble to one (it is claimed) weighing 240 pounds. This mine was discovered in 1882 by Jack Shedden, who later bonded it to Tabor and Wurtzback.

Iron King and Empire, owned by Phillips and H. M. Elliott, were the first two mines located in Kingston, but it was probably news of the Solitaire bonanza spreading over the country which brought so many people flocking to town. More mines were discovered. A town sprang into life. A survey began August, 1882, and by October Kingston had been organized and incorporated. A population of a few hundred soon ballooned into an enthusiastic 5,000.

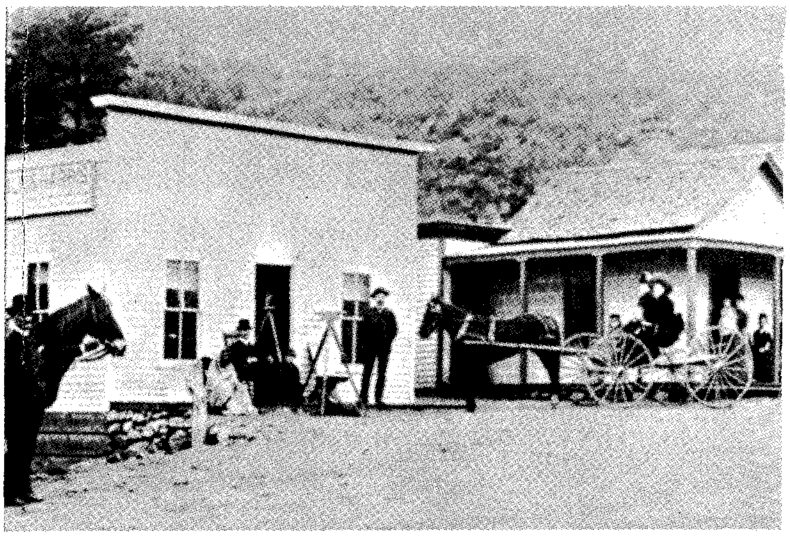
Prospectors, miners, and discharged soldiers from nearby forts helped to swell this population. Stores, blacksmith shops, restaurants, neat little homes, a school, and hastily flung together shacks followed.

When women of the town decided they needed "culture" and that there was no better way to attain it than by good sermons in a church, some of the town's enterprising citizens passed the hat. In one night they collected enough money and gold and silver nuggets (together with jewelry donated by the "painted ladies" of the saloons), to build the Little Episcopal Church, which was used for services up until the late 1940s.

Town leaders recognized a need for entertainment and built a fine theater. Soon, townsmen were being treated to good shows. From all over the country came entertainers eager to please the generous people of Kingston. Lillian Russell brought in her company, and it is said she stopped the show with her wit and beauty.

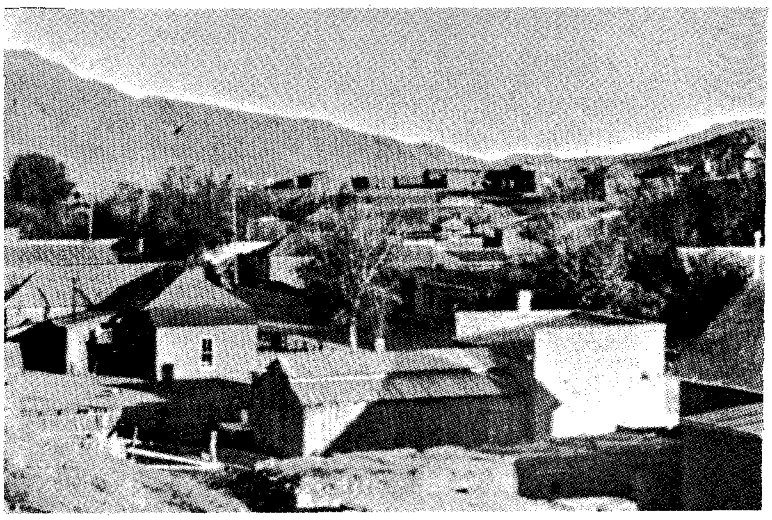
Kingston was a lusty youngster and its citizens boasted

(Continued on page 6)



Photos Courtesy William B. Scott

Main street in Kingston, above.

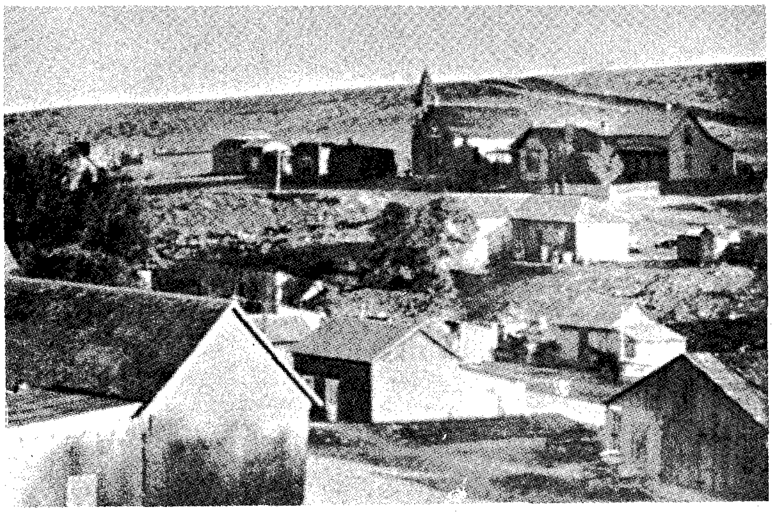


TWIN TOWNS!

more than a year later, we leaped at the chance to present the two stories and Mr. Scott's photos in one package.

We believe that many of the photos in the Scott collection were taken by a photographer named Dean W. Bloodgood, who was the first child born in Kingston after the town's founding and who now lives in Austin, Texas. Mr. Bloodgood was known to have made many photos in the two old towns. We were first put onto this possibility when several photos sent us by the authors—acquired from Dean Bloodgood himself—were found to be exact duplicates of several shots in the Scott collection. Identifications of photos from the Scott collection were made by Charlie Myers and Miles Moffitt of Kingston, both of whom came to the town as little boys in the late 1880s.

Below, looking south over Hillsboro.



HILLSBORO —OUT OF A HAT

By THELMA KNOLES

Photos Courtesy Author

IN A STORY-BOOK setting as rich in history, myths, and scenic beauty as Germany's Black Forest, southwest New Mexico's Black Range produced the town of Hillsboro—out of a hat! Hillsboro's history glitters with gold, suffers savage Indian attacks, seethes with sensational court battles.

On April 20, 1877, two prospectors, Dan Dugan and Dave Stitzel, were working the east side of the Mimbres Range when Dugan picked up a piece of float. As miners do, he crumbled it in his fingers and remarked in disgust that "anyone ought to know that such a formation as this carries no mineral." Stitzel optimistically dropped a few like specimens into his pocket and took them to an old quartz mill on Mimbres River. The assay showed an amazing $160 of gold per ton, and a new mining district was born.

A month later the partners had located the Opportunity and Ready Pay Mines. Other prospectors moved in. In August the first house was built and the new town began its lusty life. More than a dozen miners each had his own name for the rapidly growing community. In December all the suggested names were written on slips of paper and were put into a hat. Hillsborough was drawn, believed to have been the choice of English and Cornish hardrock miners. It later was simplified by the legislature to Hillsboro.

From a distance, the Black Range looms against the sky in a series of dark curves cut by light streaks of rocky formations. Lush with game, gorgeous with wild flowers, thickly grown with mesquite, agarita and manzanita, yucca, ocotillo and sacaton, walnuts, junipers, piñons, oaks, cottonwoods, and, in the upper canyons, pines and aspen, these beautiful mountains long were known as Sierra Diablo or Devil Mountains, fiercely defended against white settlers by the Apaches until 1872, when the lure of gold brought prospectors to challenge the original inhabitants.

Hillsboro is situated on the rocky bed of Percha Creek. Old-timers say Percha got its name from the hundreds of wild turkeys which used to roost in cottonwoods lining

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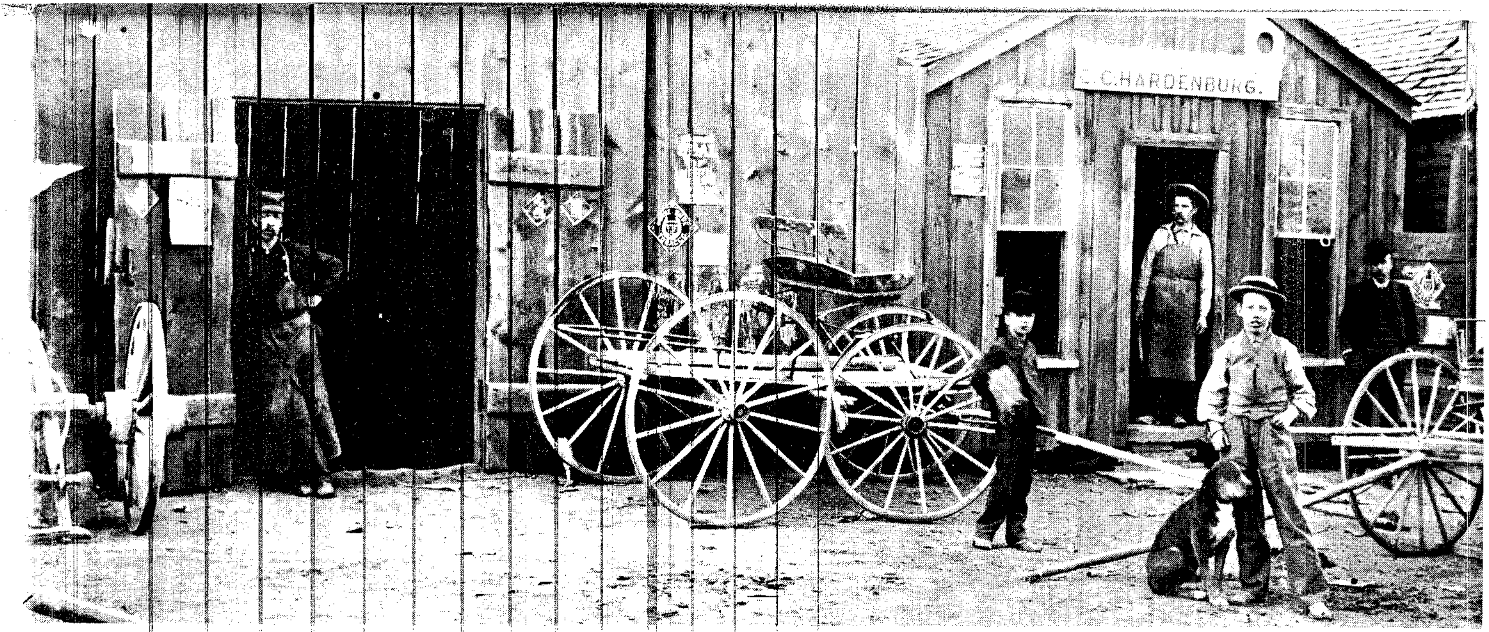
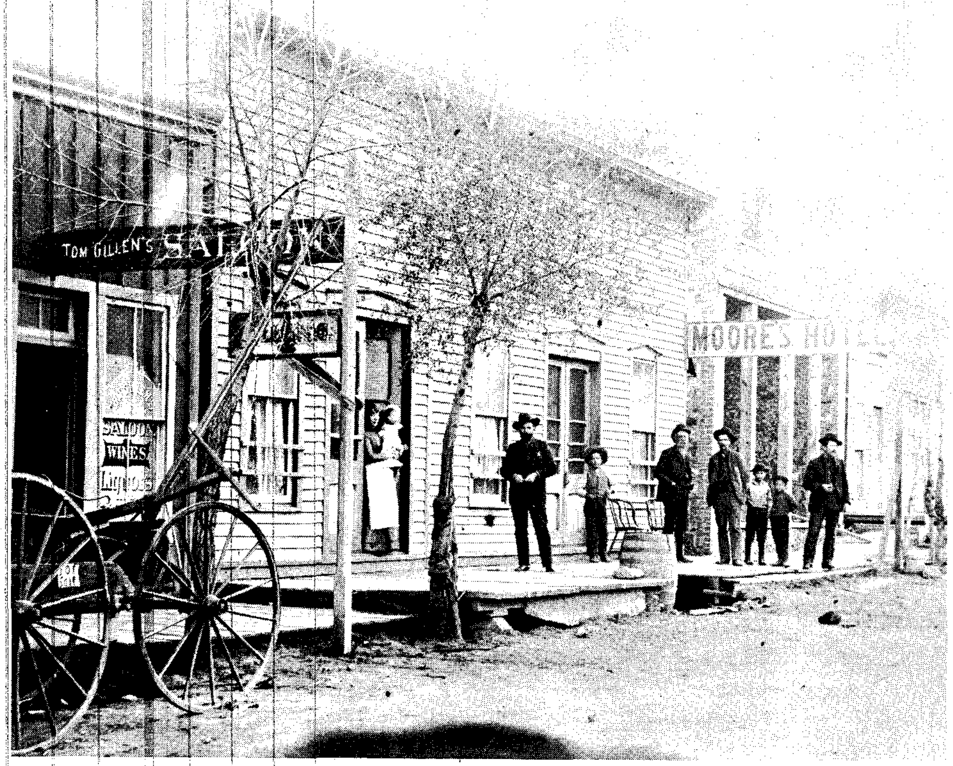
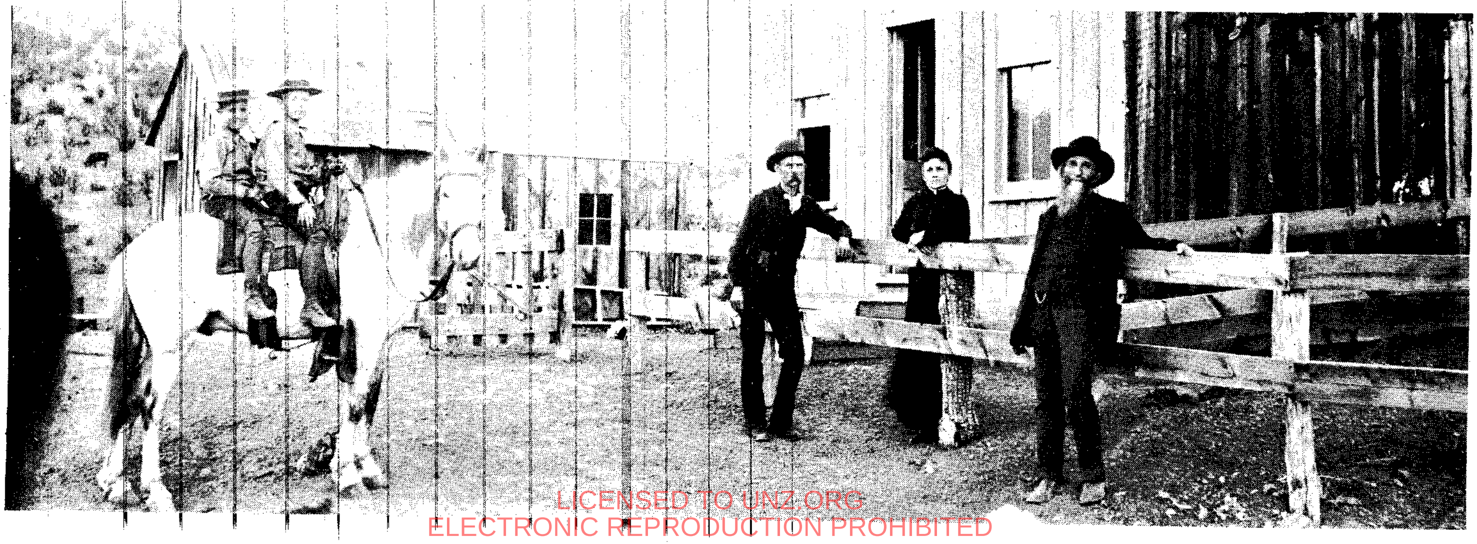
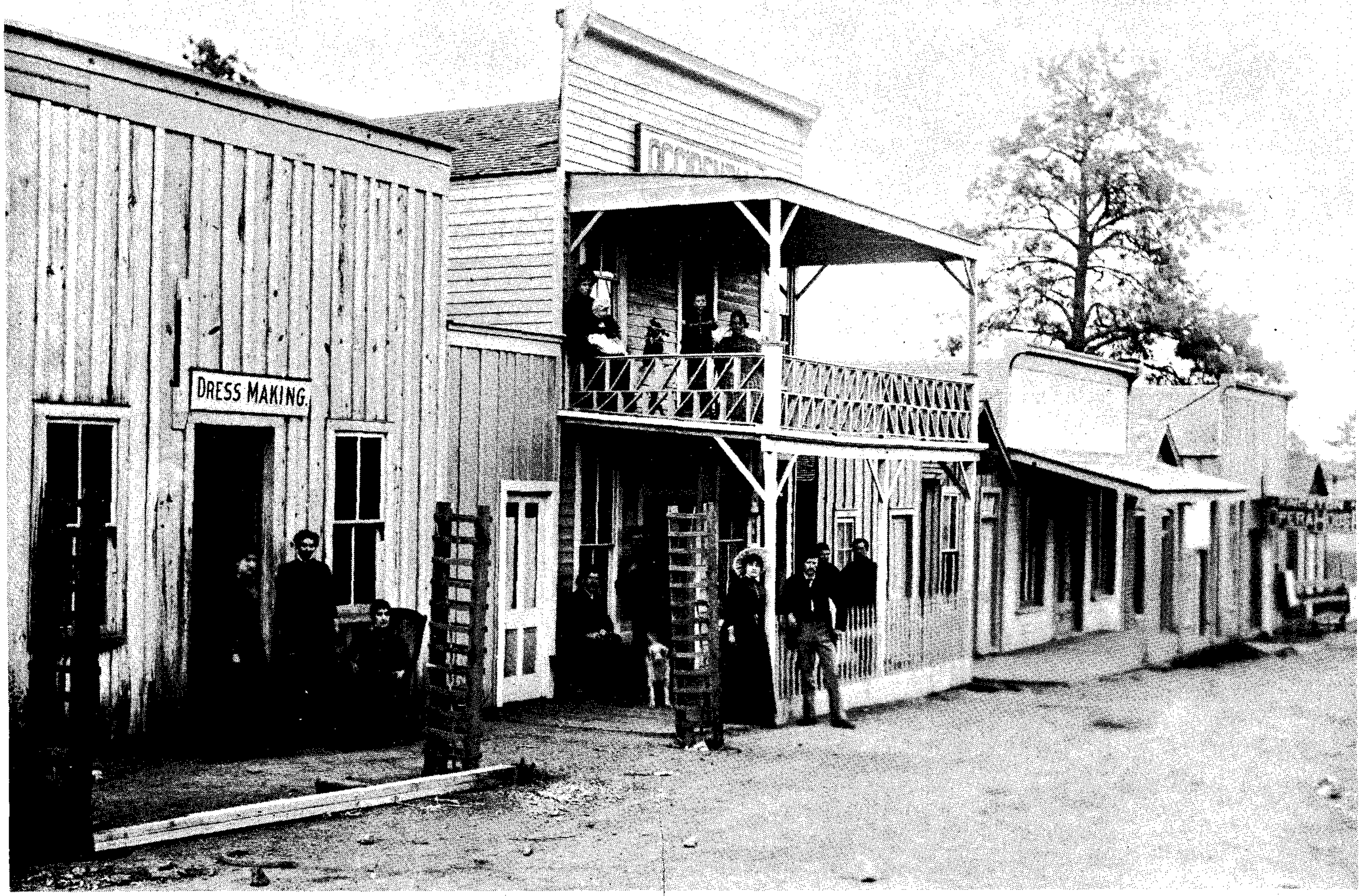

E. C. HARDENBURG.

Hardenburg's fix-it shop above in Kingston. Left, Dr. King, a physician said to be town founder. Kingston Street below where Tom Gillen, an Irish Catholic, closed the bar in his saloon on Sundays so a Methodist missionary could conduct services. Bottom, five Kingston citizens.

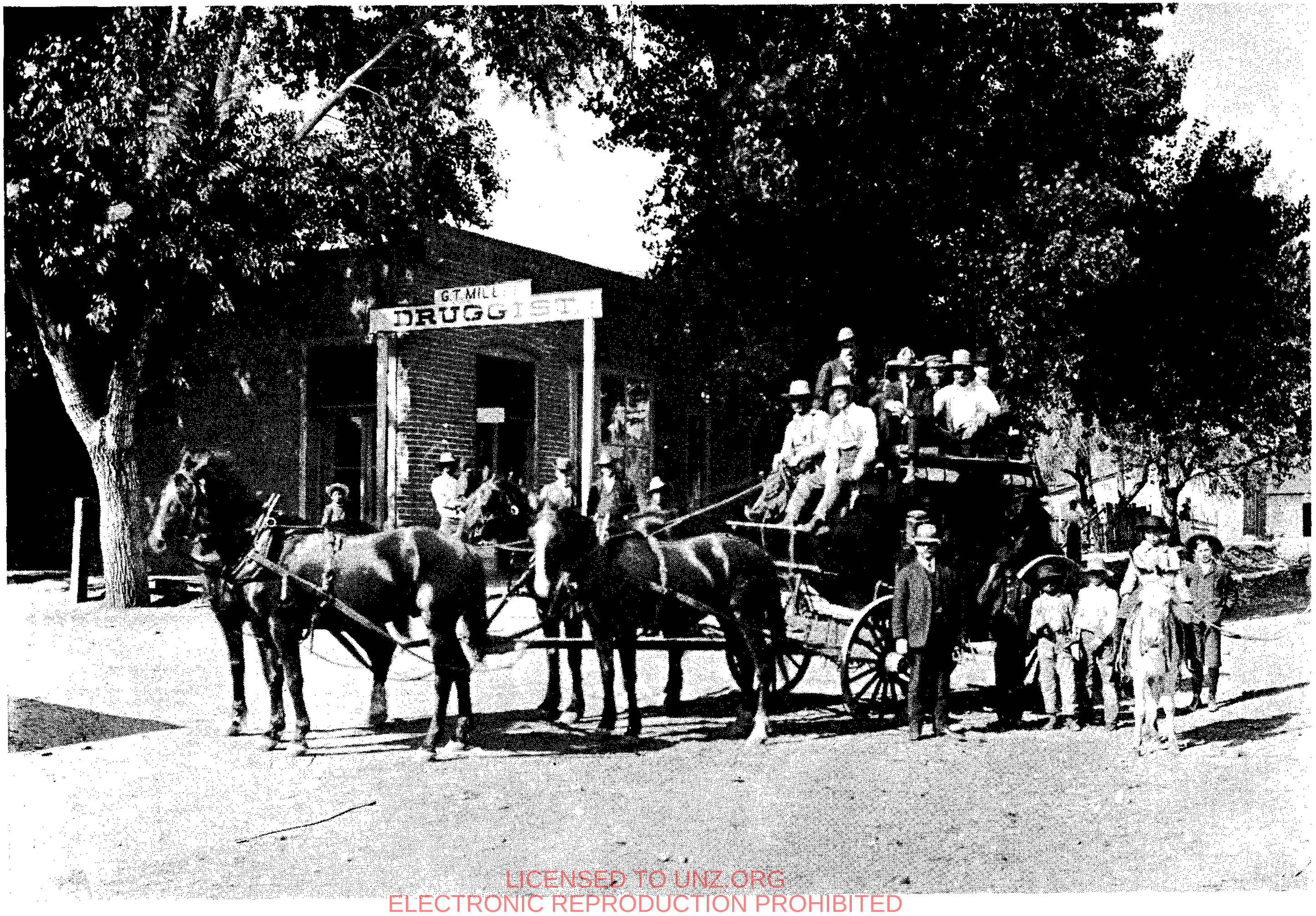
Photos Courtesy William B. Scott


TOM GILLEN'S SALOON
SALOON
WINES
Liquors
MOORE'S HOTEL





North side of Main Street in Kingston, above, boasted a dress shop, the Occidental (a hotel?), and far right an opera house where Lillian Russell and other celebrated performers and troupes entertained. Below, the Kingston-Hillsboro-Lake Valley stage on Hillsboro's main street in 1905. Driver holding the reins is Cornelius Sullivan, father of Sierra County Sheriff Bill Sullivan.



Kingston Roared Like a Lion

(Continued from page 2)

that in no other place in the U.S.A. could a man sit down to his breakfast a pauper and eat his supper a millionaire. Soon there were twenty-two saloons, three newspapers, and three hotels in this rowdy, rich town. Mountain Pride was one of the hotels and Victorio was another, ironically named for the murdering Apache chief. This cunning, cruel Indian led his braves in raids on Kingston and other mining towns, murdering ranchers and farmers in all sections of the Black Range country.

The Black Range had long been the favorite hunting ground of the Apaches, so naturally the Indians resented the prospectors and ranchers. It was war from the very beginning of the "white eye"-invasion of the territory. Geronimo, Victorio, Loco, and Nana became names to be dreaded. It is claimed, however, that the Apaches raided Kingston less than any other town. They found the tough miners good shots who never seemed to know when they were whipped. Probably word got around among the Indians that Kingston was so tough it "had a man for breakfast every morning."

ONE OF THE richest mines was Victorio, which produced $10,000,000. The Calamity Jane was named for the famous lady of the same name who was a good friend of Captain Jack Crawford and reportedly came to visit him in Kingston where he owned a mine. Lady Franklin was one of a group of mines dotting Bullion Hill. Others in this group were Iron King, Brush Heap, Empire, The Dove, Deer Trail, and Virginia.

Today, hills surrounding Kingston are entwined with old trails leading to abandoned mines. The trails are now practically covered with manzanita, live oaks, piñon, sacaton grass, and juniper. Young people who enjoy roaming the hills, either on horseback or afoot, will find many artifacts. Rock collectors call this country a paradise.

Kingston had numerous illustrious visitors, among whom was Mark Twain. He liked what he saw and wrote about it. He found many interesting characters in the town, one of these being Sheba Hirst, a man of rare humor. Twain immediately dubbed Sheba the "wit of Kingston." Another man who claimed Twain's attention was a handsome young fellow, Johnny Moffett. Moffett was a miner, but when he wasn't working he liked to dress in good clothes. He introduced velvet corduroy suits to Kingston. Twain called Johnny "The Dandy of Kingston," and Johnny's friends all agreed he deserved this title.

Other nationally known men who lived in Kingston were Ed Doheny and Albert B. Fall. They were good friends and later were associated in the Tea Pot Dome oil scandal. Doheny was a miner and Fall was said by many old-timers to have practiced law in Kingston. Others definitely remember that he taught school in the town; he probably did both. On Main Street Doheny built a fine home, which many years later was torn down

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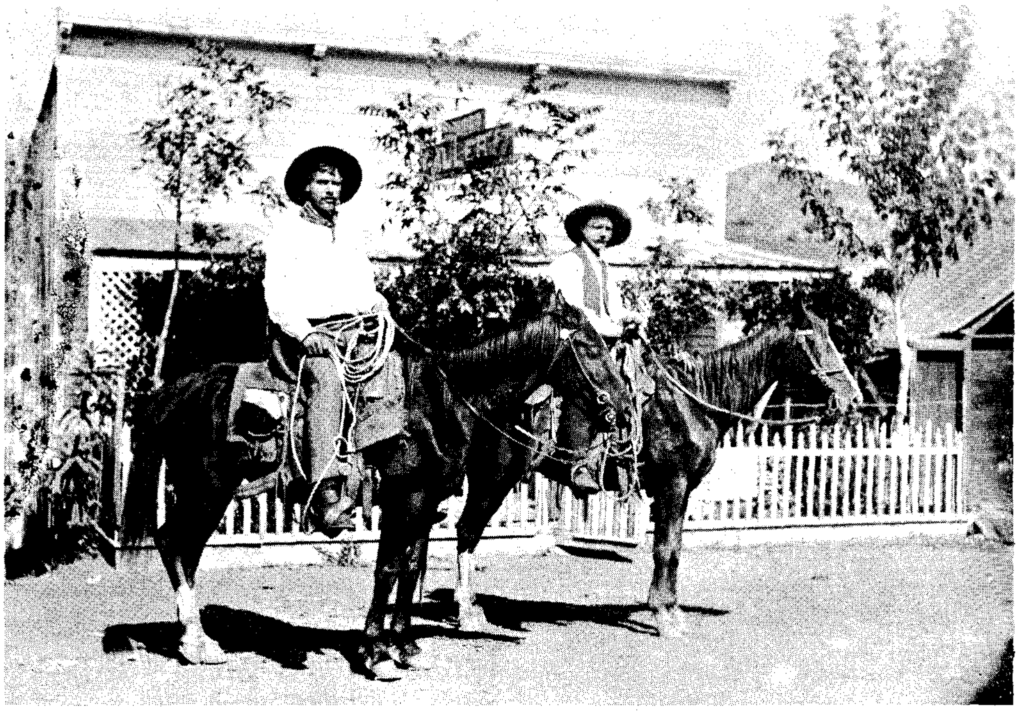


Clockwise from above, cowboys pausing in Hillsboro; a home believed to be in Kingston; Kingston Cemetery where people from all walks of life rest, including Nicolas Tarsia, from the court of Franz Josef of Austria, who died a sheepherder on Bob Reed's ranch in the middle 1850s; and the interior of the Daylash Store in Hillsboro.

Photos Courtesy William B. Scott

Hillsboro—Out of a Hat

(Continued from page 3)

the banks. In early days the creek bed was the only route between Hillsboro and Kingston, nine miles up the canyon. Stagecoaches, freight wagons, burro trains, and horseback riders were threatened by raging torrents when cloudbursts filled the creek in rainy season and by murderous Apaches who found the narrow, steep canyon with its huge boulders a perfect place to ambush travelers *in any season.*

By 1882 Hillsboro was booming, the center of the gold mining district. Kingston up the Percha was famous for rich silver bonanzas; nearby Lake Valley boasted the Bridal Chamber with the purest silver ever mined; and Hillsboro claimed the magic of gold.

Dan Dugan again made a sensational discovery, this time in partnership with Frank Pitcher. Resting under a clump of oak bushes, picking up and breaking bits of rock at hand, they recognized free gold in the fragments. Having just killed a large rattlesnake, they naturally named the new discovery "Rattlesnake Lode," later known as the "Snake." Placer gold was found in Snake and Wick Gulches. Rich diggings turned up on Slap Jack Hill. George Wells brought $90,000 in gold dust and nuggets into town from Wick's Gulch. Ore was worked in *arrastres* built on Mattie Avenue. *New Mexico Mines and Minerals* stated that perhaps the most notable feature in the Hillsboro gold mines was the unbroken continuity of the ore veins. Famous mines were the Opportunity, Bonanza, Ready Pay, Wicks Gulch, Statehood, Templar. Many bore Irish names such as St. Patrick, Galloway Slugger, Tara Hall, Erin Go Bragh.

GOLD ALWAYS HAS been associated with Hillsboro. Tales of lost mines whose wealth was proved by bags heavy with golden nuggets are still kept alive around hunters' campfires. Old-timers of Hillsboro tell thrilling stories of gold strikes. Robert Martin, whose experience covered decades of the town's most exciting history, told of a real gold rush not so many years ago near Percha Dam. In one of the little gullies off the creek enough gold was picked up to fill beer bottles. The town went wild. Martin recalled that people couldn't even stop to eat, so powerful was the gold-fever.

Constant Indian raids finally helped bring about the closing of many of the mines. Indians always had claimed this region as their hunting grounds. Ruins of one of their prehistoric villages were found on a bluff near town. Led by Mangas Colorado, Cochise, Nana, Victorio, and later Geronimo, wily and murderous Apaches used every means to keep Mexicans or Americans from settling in their mountain strongholds.

One of the cruelest of Victorio's deeds took place near Hillsboro. Homer Tarbill, a fifteen-year-old Hillsboro boy, was visiting the sons of the Trujillo family on a ranch about five miles south of town when Victorio and his band stopped there. Victorio asked Mrs. Trujillo if the

(Continued on page 53)

LOLA

By ED EARL REPP

Photos Courtesy Author

MONTEZ -- MAN BREAKER

The sting of the Tarantula Lady carried poison.
Oh well, there were worse ways to die!

IT IS STILL THERE—in a side room to the right of the front entrance of the rustic, run-down, old two-story house at the corner of Mill and Neal Streets in Grass Valley, California, heart of the Mother Lode. The couch of Lola Montez.

Here in a room approximately nine by twelve feet the glamorous Lola Montez, most sought-after female of two continents, entertained many of her wealthy male guests. Red velvet drapes, chosen by herself in San Francisco, still hang over the front windows overlooking Mill Street, once a mining town thoroughfare knee deep in mud, churned by freight and ore wagons and the boots of 10,000 gold-mad prospectors.

One need only to look at the room and its plush decor to understand that here was the domicile of an elegant lady. The old Martha Washington piano, still almost in perfect tune, has felt the soft, velvety fingers of the famous Lola Montez, also known as the Countess of Lanfield.

Gold was already flowing like yellow water from the rich strikes surrounding the house. The Empire Mine was pouring a golden tide into the economy of the nation. That some of it found its way into the hands of Lola Montez is a certainty, for in the dining room china closet in the house rests her precious gold scales, a relic of a wild, romantic era in western American history.

On the couch, actually a full-sized bed with headboard of select and beautifully-grained mahogany, lies her handmade banjo with which she frequently entertained her guests. The blood-red velvet bedspread, somewhat faded and worn with the passing of more than a century, attests to her elegance. The gold-leafed furnishings in the adjoining parlor reflect her love for material wealth. On the papered walls hang rich paintings and etchings of Napoleon, King Ludwig of Bavaria, Count Bernadotte and others.

During the days when pretentious homes were quite commonplace, the Montez domicile was rated as upper class. Yet, as in some, there were no solid gold door knobs, light fixtures or fireside tools—unless thieves and vandals have since pilfered them. Sufficient decor remains, however, to indicate that Lola was of upper crust society. Her bathtub, once encrusted with gold leaf, today rests on the front veranda.

LOLA MONTEZ sailed around the Horn in the early 1850s after a very lucrative theatrical tour of Europe. She landed in San Francisco when that city was a boom town on the western frontier, and had been billed long in advance to grace the pine-board stage of the Jenny Lind Theatre in Portsmouth Square. San Franciscans were agog with excitement and expectation.

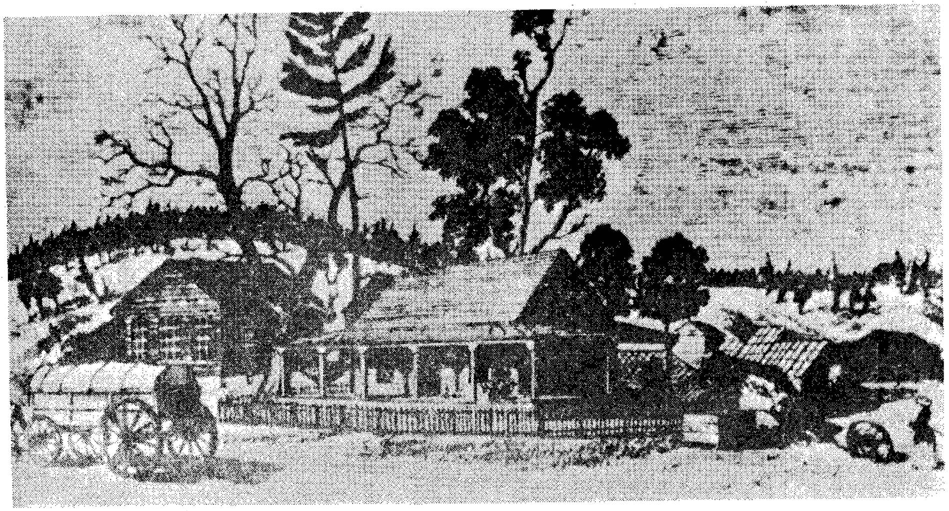
When the windjammer on which she was a passenger was sighted entering the Golden Gate, 5,000 love-hungry miners, adventurers, gamblers, bankers, tycoons and plain, every-day servants rushed to

(Continued on page 46)

This old photo discovered at Rough and Ready Toll House four miles from Grass Valley is believed to be one of the few existing of Pat Hull.

Early sketch of Lola Montez's home now at the corner of Mill and Neal Streets in Grass Valley, California, with Lola and one of her pet bears at lower right.

Courtesy John N. Blair, Montez House



The MEN

Their todays are never as real as their tomorrows or their yesterdays for they are the men with the lonesome souls—the miners—

By ARMAND BRAZIL
as told to IRMA BRAZIL

Photos Courtesy Author

THIS IS A STORY of the mines, a story of the old-timers, the old diggers, men who helped make the West. It is a true picture of the way they lived, of tremendous courage and bravery in times of extreme danger. It is a story, I suppose, that has no ending, because as long as there's a shaft to dig or a drift to drive, there will be miners to do it. Men like the old-time miner will come along, these men who were illiterate for the most part, men who worked hard and found their pleasures where they could.

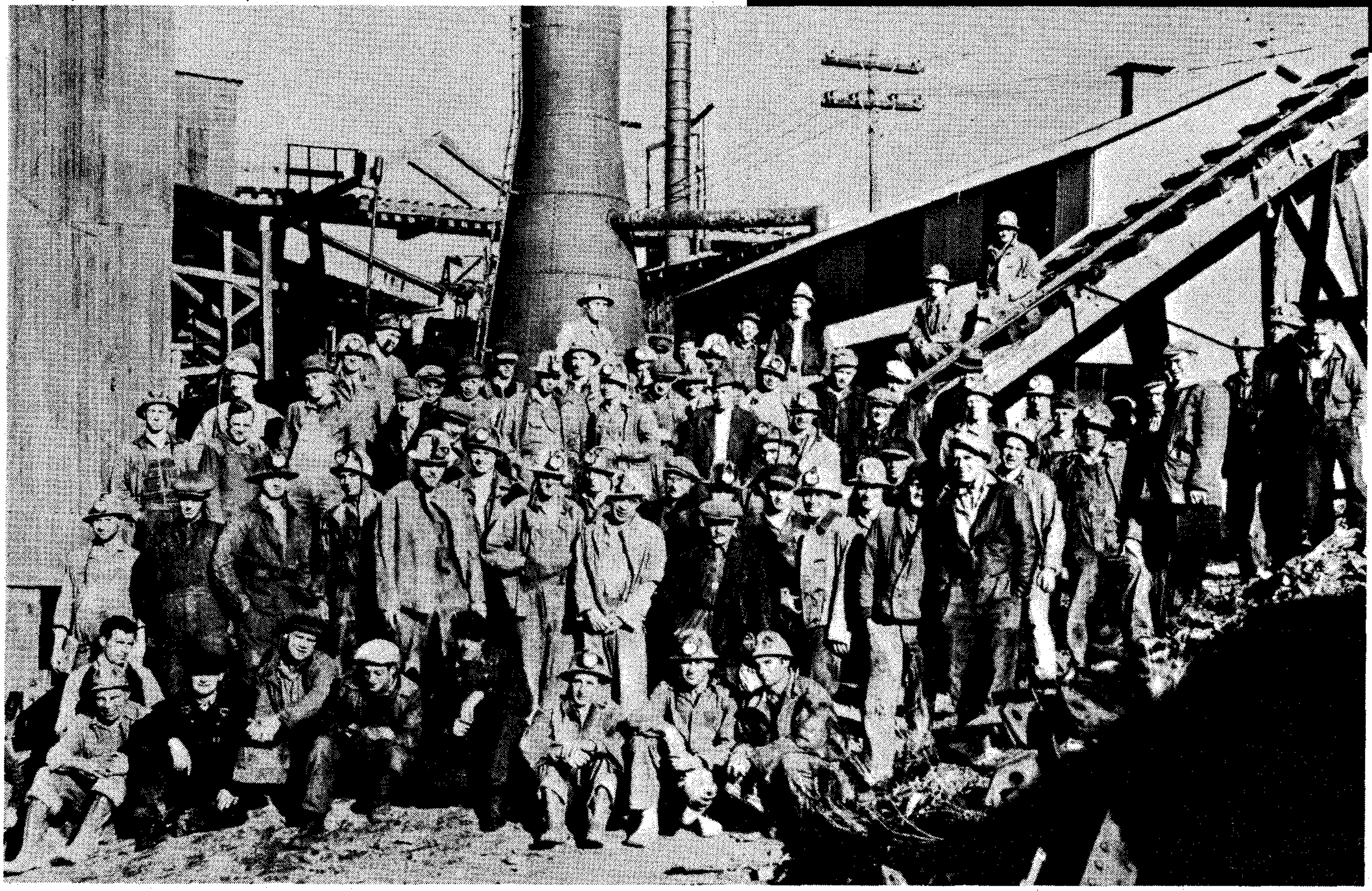
I was orphaned at the age of thirteen when my parents were killed in Hawthorne, California. After hitchhiking for days, hoping to reach an uncle in Colorado (and spending my first night in jail after asking a lady for something to eat), I finally arrived in Telluride. I slept underneath the train depot platform my first night in town.

The next morning I was dirty and broke and hungry. I wandered out into the street and a lady came up in her car and stopped and asked me where I was going. I told her I was going to get a job. She wanted to know where I lived and I told her I didn't live no place. She wanted to know where my folks lived and I told her they were dead. She suggested that I come to her house and have some breakfast. I did and she gave me a room. Her name was Rosie. She sent me over to the old Smuggler Mine to rustle a job and I got it.

I boarded at Rosie's house from the time I came to Telluride at thirteen until I was married two years later. Rosie was madam of all the cathouses in town and the surrounding vicinity but she wouldn't let me have any of her girls (in fact, she told her girls that if any of them even looked at me it would be too bad). She told me the same thing.

It seemed like Rosie tried to mother me. She'd get up in the morning and cook my breakfast, fix my lunch, then come to my room and wake me and tell me it was time to go to work. She had a big cookstove in the kitchen. Lots of times when I'd come in at night, just a kid, I'd be so tired I'd lie down behind that cookstove while I was waiting for supper and I'd pass out. She'd let me sleep until it was time for me to go to bed and then wake me to eat. She sure looked after me real close and saw to it that I got my rest. She charged me

Day shift at Ajax Mine, Cripple Creek, Colorado in April 1939.
Courtesy Denver Public Library Western Collection



$7 a week, board and room. When I married, she gave me an itemized bill for $758 board that I had paid her and then gave me the $758 back for a wedding present.

Over a period of forty years Rosie did an awful lot of good. She died in 1940. Rosie helped take care of many miners' families after the husband was killed or injured in the mines. Several boys—prominent engineers today—would have never made it if Rosie hadn't financed them through school. She made no excuses for herself or her actions. There was only one person she really seemed to care about and that was Jumbo Martin. Rosie was Jumbo's "girl."

Jumbo got drunk one night and went to the end of town to a dairy. He found a two-year-old Jersey heifer. Somehow or other he swung her across his shoulders, arms clamped around her legs so she couldn't kick free. He was a powerful man, Jumbo was. He went staggering down the street with her.

Rosie's house in Silverton, Colorado.

WHO DON'T FIT IN

A bunch of us came out on the sidewalk to see what was happening and there Jumbo was, walking down the street with that heifer across his shoulders. As he went past us, he said over his shoulder, "By Gar! You're yusht as pretty as Rosie and I will take you to Rosie and prove it to you." Well, Rosie got mad about that—awful mad.

In her late years, Rosie sold her houses and bought a nice little cottage and she and Jumbo spent their last years together.

MIKE BRENNAN was superintendent of the old Smuggler Mine when Rosie sent me over to look for a job. He gave me my first job and kinda looked after me. Mike was a very fine engineer. He had about 200 men working for him and a 500-ton mill to supervise, but he wasn't too busy to take a teenage boy and give him books on geology and see that he read them.

He did his utmost to make a good miner out of me. He tried to make a well-read man out of me. There are so many things to say about Mike. He had the patience of Job even though he fired me fourteen times in three days.

My first job was trapping (opening and closing air doors so mules could pull their train of ore to the main station). The work wasn't hard and my boss wasn't tough. I remember one time a miner sent me looking for a roof jack. I looked hard and was sent from one place to another by different miners. I looked for that roof jack for two hours before I got wise to the fact that there is no such thing as a roof jack.

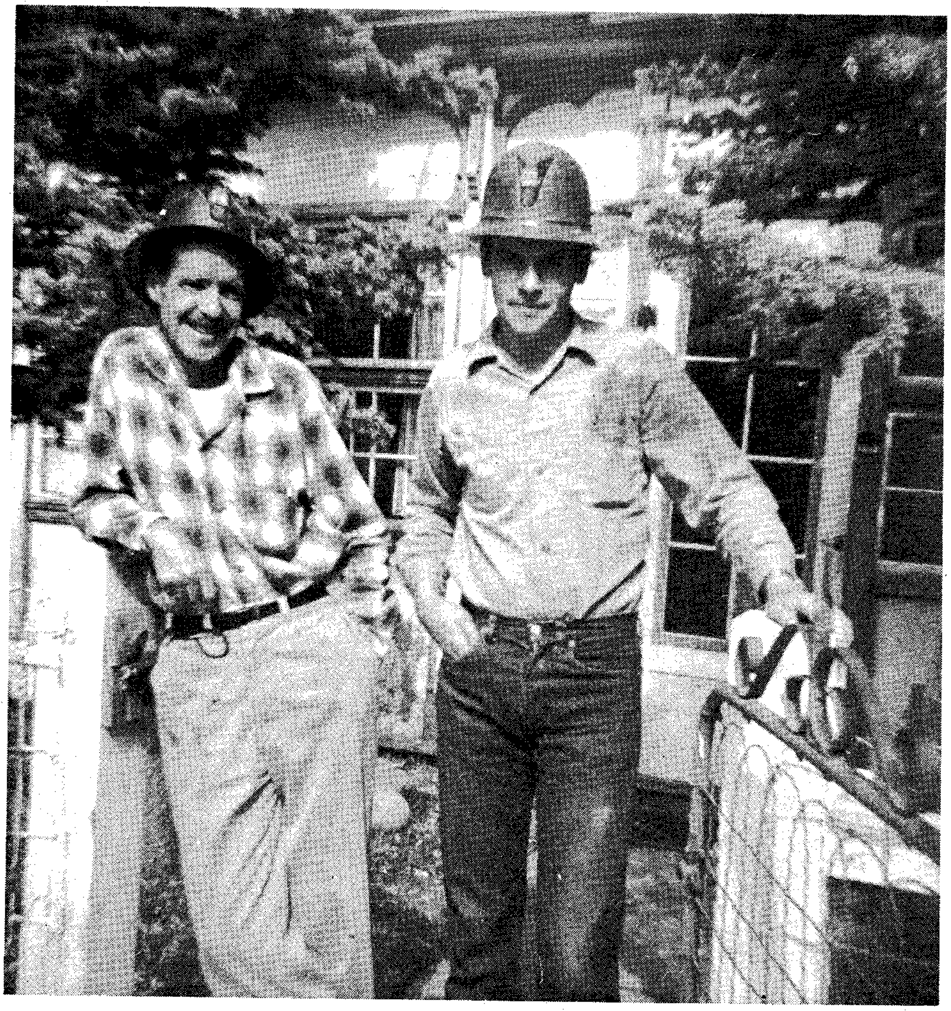
A short time after that I got smart and played a trick on a muleskinner who had been giving me a bad time. He had once wired my lunch bucket with electricity and had done some other things that weren't so nice. I greased the tracks on a downhill grade where he came in to the main station. I nearly killed myself, the mule, and the miner. That mule was sure a-running when he came past the station, and that miner was sure scared. That was the end of my trapping days in the mine because I was fired off that job and was put to turning steel for Jumbo Martin.

The first day I turned steel for Jumbo, he was swinging a fifteen-pound double jack. He'd hit that steel and it would ring—oh! how it would ring! It would vibrate in my hand and I would very shakily turn it a quarter or an eighth of a turn and Jumbo would hit it again. He was a big 270-pound giant compared to me, a 90-pound boy. This went on for about twenty minutes, then Jumbo stopped and laid his double jack down. He looked at me kind of funny and said, "Well now, son, don't get nervous. I only hit one man a day and just fifteen years ago today I hit my man for today." I turned steel for Jumbo Martin off and on for four years at the old Smuggler Mine.

In the summer of '32, when I was eighteen, I went to Cripple Creek. It was my first trip away from Telluride but I thought I'd like to try my wings in a different camp. I hired out to Apex Mine in Cripple Creek. I took a job in a drift at the 800-foot level. I was following an inch-and-a-quarter lead of ore, using an old screwtail liner machine. The rock was so hard no timber was needed. I followed the lead of ore for approximately two-and-a-half months.

One afternoon as I drilled out, I began to get a little high grade ore at the back of my hole but being a kid, I didn't realize what that meant so I didn't report it. I had been having a little trouble pulling my rounds clean so this day I put in a nine-hole burn cut. It pulled. When I blasted that night and went home, you could tell from the way the blast sounded that she pulled clean. The next morning, when I went down to work, we started picking up solid chunks of gold 300 to 350 feet before we got to the pile of muck.

In one round that vein had opened from one-inch wide to over five-feet wide, worth $65,000 a ton. Later it was named the Gold Room. The company immediately put steel doors across the drift and padlocked it. For years after, when they wanted to develop or when the mine was running in the red, they would open up



The author (left) and a partner, Ronnie Miller, in a recent photo at Lake City, Colorado.

those steel doors, put in one round and put the company back in the green again.

The last account I heard (in 1955) they had shipped $37 million from the Gold Room and still had it blocked off to keep the mine from going in the red for years to come. When I brought in the Gold Room back in '32, the company asked me what I wanted more than anything in this world. That was easy! I was just a boy and the little Packard 120 was my heart's desire. They said nothing then but two days later, when I stepped off the cage, the superintendent and the president of the corporation were waiting and handed me the keys and title to a brand new Packard 120.

WHEN I left Cripple Creek and went back to Mike Brennan, he and I went to the Neglected Mine near Durango, Colorado. Mike Brennan was superintendent and he gave me and my brand new Packard a pusher job. I was quite a wheel in those days. I wore riding pants with puttees and a leather jacket and even smoked tailor-made cigarettes.

Mike didn't like to leave the mine so every Tuesday and Friday I went into Durango to send a report to the mine owners in Washington, D.C. One Tuesday I went in and there was a telegram instructing Mr. Brennan or Mr. Brazil (the owners didn't know my age) to be in San Francisco the next morning. I didn't have time to go back to the Neglected and tell Mike about the telegram. Anyway, I was second in charge, so I got in my Packard and headed for San Francisco. I made that drive, 1,200 miles over dirt road, in just 25 hours.

I arrived at the Roosevelt Hotel shortly after noon. As I walked up to the desk, the bell captain and clerk looked as though they were going to chase me out, for my face and hands were dusty, my hair was long and my leather jacket and riding pants showed they'd been given a great deal of hard use. I asked if there was a reservation for the foreman of the Neglected Mine, a Mr. Brazil, if you please. Their attitude changed immediately.

When they found that I was Mr. Brazil, an old man of eighteen, they told me they had orders to send me up to the fourth floor where a meeting was in progress. I thought I should clean up first so they called my bosses and they said to come up immediately.

Mr. Saunders, president of the corporation, opened the door and said, "What can I do for you, son?"

I said, "I'm Mr. Brazil."

I thought Mr. Saunders was going to faint for he had a sale going for his Neglected Mine and had sent for his mine foreman. Here was a kid, who had never shaved, presenting himself as his foreman. You talk about dumbfounded! But he invited me in—there was nothing else he could do, for I had the reports he needed.

When I entered the room, my confidence went down the drain. In that room were three attorneys, five directors of the board of the Neglected Mining Company, and a man and woman who were interested in buying the property. I felt very self-conscious because I'd just driven twenty-five hours without rest and hadn't washed in forty. I didn't feel anything like a big wheel anymore. I was just a scared kid.

The elderly couple, Mr. and Mrs. Jensen, put me at ease and began asking me questions about the Neglected and about mining in general. Mr. Jensen asked me about rounding in and rounding out. He said he realized we had machines nowadays but wondered if I had ever used a single jack or a double jack. I told him I was a fairly good single jack hand and threw out my chest and said I'd turned steel for Jumbo Martin a lot, just as if everyone should know Jumbo.

Mrs. Jensen, who was sitting back in an easy chair, sat straight up and exclaimed, "Young man! Is that hardheaded Swede still breaking rock?"

I told them, "Sure."

They began telling me how Mr. Jensen and Jumbo had worked together back in the days when they were poor. They had made millions in Cripple Creek and were wanting a mine again just to kinda come back home. Mr. Saunders' attorney tried to get in the act but Mr. Jensen told him to shut up. To use his exact words, he said, "This is the first real prospector or miner that Mother and I have seen in nigh on to twenty years. We're going to buy the Neglected because he says it's good and because he's turned steel for my old pardner Jumbo."

Mr. Saunders and the board of directors began to act as though they'd done a lot of sorting to pick an eighteen-year-old boy for mine foreman. They even called me Mr. Brazil. Mr. and Mrs. Jensen invited me to dinner and offered to show me the town. I told them I'd like to clean up and change clothes and they said, no, they could see dressed-up stuffed-shirts anytime they cared to; they just wanted to be with a digger. We went to classy places that night and people really stared at me with those two well-dressed people.

They bought the Neglected and she's been in heavy production for the past thirty years. They've taken out many times what they gave for it. Their heirs still own the property, I believe.

WHEN I WAS nineteen, Mike Brennan made a mine foreman out of me at the Ida L. There I earned the name "Didgie Blast." Now Didgie Blast isn't a pretty name by any means; it certainly isn't an honorable name. I've tried since to do things to erase that nickname. At the time, I was drinking heavily, although I was pretty young and had a family. There is no excuse. I was a drunk. I was an alcoholic.

I'd meet the men on the station as they'd come out at night and I'd say, "Good evening, boy! Did you blast?" If they said, "Yes," I'd say, "That's fine, boy! That's a good boy!"

If they said, "No," I'd say, "Pick up your pay as you go out." It didn't make any difference to me who they were, what they were, or what the condition of the mine or their working place was. I wanted a round in and a round out every day. I wanted everyone of them to report a blast at night.

If they didn't blast, I fired them. I made a bad name quick in those mines, a name it took years to try to erase and when I did sober up, some fourteen years later, and tried to square things around the way they should have been squared around with my fellow miners, well, you know, they took advantage of me as bad as I had taken advantage of them before.

After I had been sober for about two months I quit my mine foreman job at the Ida L. and went to Death Valley to go to work at the Noonday Mine for Anaconda Copper. Who should I run into but Mike Brennan! He was foreman there. It was like old home week when I saw him. I hired out there as a miner. I wouldn't take on the responsibility of a shifting job even though I was offered it. I was trying to get the whiskey out of my system. I was trying to learn to live with myself and with God as I understood Him or was beginning to understand Him.

Again Mike came to my rescue. He had patience with me, with my nervousness, and he talked me into taking a job shifting across from him. It turned out all right because Mike was there to lean on. He told me he was ashamed to think of the way I had messed people around and how I had failed. I often think of Mike because I haven't had a drink from that time on.

Mike returned from the mines and was postmaster for some time near Mohave; when I stopped by one time to see him I was told he had passed on about six months before. I'll always have a soft spot in my heart for him.

In '36 I went back to work for the Jensens at the Neglected. I hired out as superintendent of the mine. Tuesday and Friday I had to go to town to send in reports. At that time my uncle, Vest Day, was in Durango. Every Tuesday and Friday we had dinner together. Vest Day was the uncle I'd started out to find when I was orphaned at thirteen, but I was a long time finding him. When I did, he offered to put me through school and take care of me, but at that time I had a good job and thought I was a man.

Again, after I was married, Vest wanted to take care of both my wife and myself and put me through high school and the School of Mines. He was a very fine and very honorable man.

There was an old prospector by the name of Starr who came in every Tuesday and Friday to have dinner with us. He was broke and I think those were the only two square meals he had each week. One Tuesday and Friday he didn't show up and Vest Day was worried.

We went in the Mandarin Cafe to order our dinner and who should come walking in but Starr. He didn't say anything to anyone but started moving the tables from the center of the dining room and placing them end to end against our booth. The Chinese owner and the waitress came running over, waving their arms. Vest and I just sat there dumbfounded.

Starr told the owner and the waitress that he wanted every order of beans in the house put on plates and set on those tables he had put next to our booth. Then he ordered three T-bone steaks. Vest thought he was crazy—so did everybody else. Vest asked him who was going to pay for it. Starr reached in his ragged coat pocket and began rolling gold nuggets across the table. He gave Vest a nugget and he gave me a nugget worth $240. He had just struck the famous Red Arrow Mine.

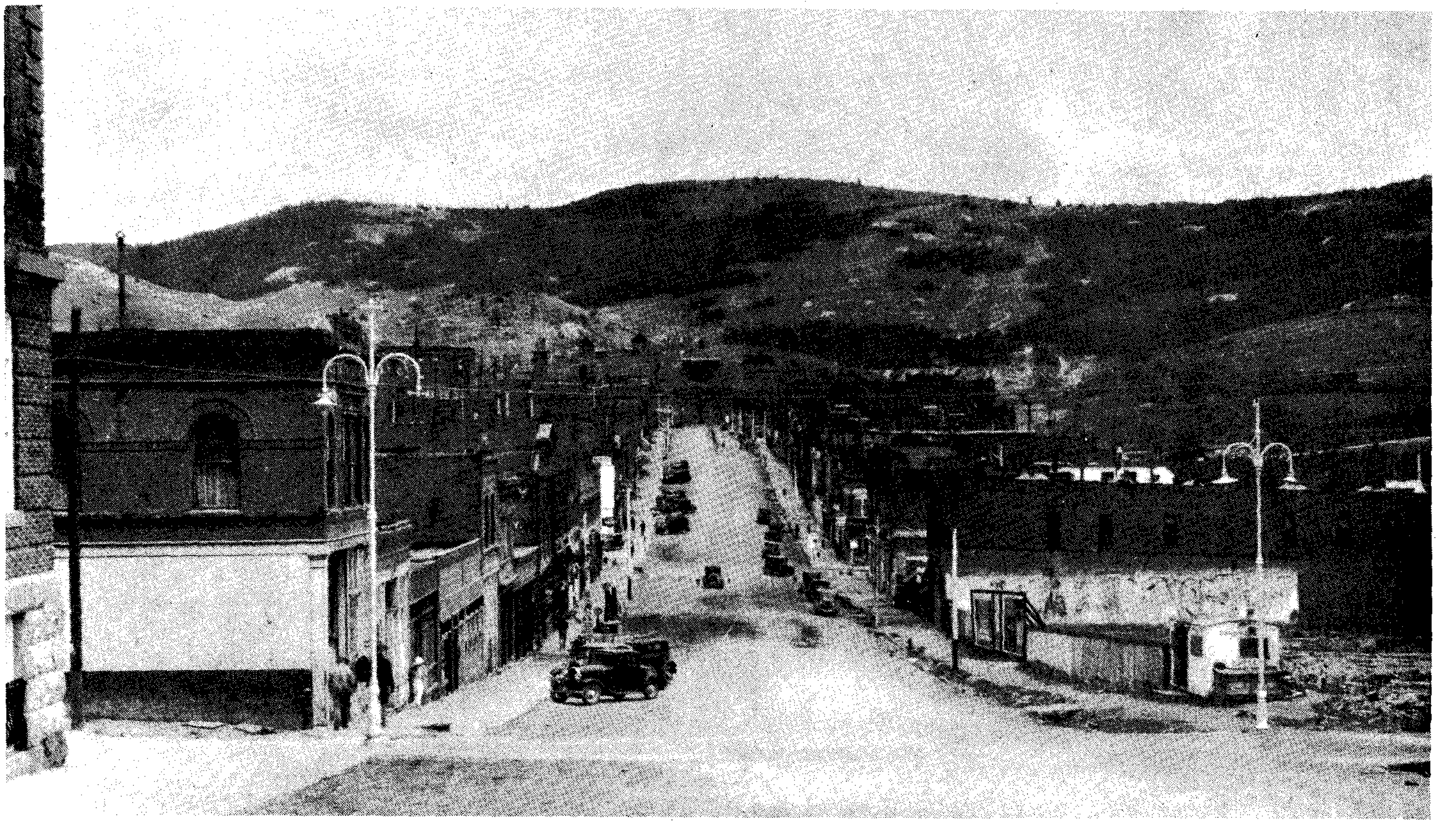
They brought the beans out on plates and set them on the tables. I didn't know there were that many beans in the world. Then they brought out the steaks. Starr sat there a second, bowed his head and said, "Thank you, God." He turned and surveyed the beans very solemnly, very slowly, then thumbed his nose at them and started to eat his steak. He said he didn't think he'd ever eat another bean. I've often wondered if he ever did.

The ore that came out of that mine was the richest any of us had ever seen. In less than thirty days, Starr shipped $480,000 worth of gold and that was just a starter. I have no idea how much he shipped over the years but he wound up a multi-millionaire. Starr shipped one truckload of ore directly to the mint in Denver. That was a sight to see—six guards with rifles sitting on that pile of gold.

I NEVER will forget the time Jumbo Martin met Carl Wiser. It was at the Copenhagen Mine in Superior. I was foreman and Carl was working for me when Jumbo came in to rustle a job. The dry house where the miners showered and changed clothes had burned down and we were taking our showers in the basement of the White Front Saloon. As

Bennett Street in Cripple Creek, Colorado about 1932 where the author went at age 18 to bring in the Apex Mine's famous Gold Room.

Courtesy Denver Public Library Western Collection



Courtesy Denver Public Library Western Collection

Silverton, Colorado about the time the author took on Sleepy Collins as a partner in 1935. Scenic Highway is seen climbing up Sultan Mountain.

Carl and I came in from work that night, Carl looked over and saw Jumbo, all 270 pounds of him. Carl looked at me and said, "Ye Gods! Look at that mountain of flesh! Didgie, I'm gonna whip that guy! I'm gonna whip him as soon as I get my clothes changed."

I don't know why I didn't tell Carl that it was Jumbo. If I had, he would have left good enough alone, but I just said, "You better let that fella be. He looks pretty big to me."

He said, "As soon as I have my shower, I'm gonna come back up here and whip him if he's still here."

We went down and took our showers. Carl seemed to be hurrying so I hurried too. I didn't want to miss the brawl. I followed Carl back upstairs and Carl walked over to Jumbo. He didn't say anything, he just hauled off and knocked Jumbo off his stool, just skinned him off it. Carl weighed maybe 150 pounds. Jumbo bounced off the floor, shook his head, grinned and started to get to his feet. Carl reached up on the bar and got a bottle of beer and hit Jumbo on the head. The bottle broke and Jumbo went down. He shook his head, grinned, and started to get to his feet again. Carl dropped the beer bottle and ran. I mean he ran fast.

I went to see if Jumbo was hurt but he wasn't. You couldn't hurt him by hitting him on the head. Jumbo rustled me for a job and I told him the only job I had open was as Carl Wiser's partner. Jumbo wanted to know who Carl was and I told him he was the guy who had hit him.

"Do you mean the little fella that was playin'? Well, I'm not mad at him. I think I'd like to have him for a partner. He seems like a pretty nice fella."

So I took Jumbo over to Carl's house and knocked on the door. Carl's wife opened the door and Carl was sitting at the table, drinking a little like he did every night. He looked up and saw Jumbo and me. When Carl saw Jumbo he made one dive and went under the bed. Well, I finally talked him out from under the bed.

He looked at Jumbo in amazement and said hesitantly, "The big feller ain't mad? Did you say he was Jumbo Martin? Well, why in the hell didn't you tell me who he was!" He came out from under that bed like a puppy dog and Jumbo shook hands with him and a wonderful friendship started that lasted until the end of Jumbo's life.

When Jumbo and Carl Wiser were partners in a three heading drift up in Superior, Wyoming, for a period of four months, they averaged two rounds in and two rounds out every day, plus their timbering work. Rounding in and out is drilling and blasting and clearing out the loose rock into mine cars. They set records up there for drift mining that I don't believe have ever been matched. Their footage was phenomenal. Jumbo was on the drill and Carl on the mucking machine. How Carl Wiser could make a mucking machine sing!

I've seen him load a five-ton car in four seconds flat with a good mucking machine. That's throwing a lot of rock! Jumbo would set up the column and liner that holds the drill. He'd drill out twenty-two holes, load them out, get them ready to blast, move his machine over to the second heading, set up and start drilling out the second round and blast the first round at noon. In the meantime, Carl would have cleaned up the heading they had blasted the night before and move to the first heading to start mucking it out.

After lunch, Jumbo would finish drilling out the second heading, load out and move all his equipment over to the third heading and come back and start setting timber and then blast the second heading before going home. That way they got two in and two out every day. Talk about a team of workhorses, those two boys were really it!

I remember one time in Silverton, Colorado, Jumbo, Carl Wiser, Butt Block, T-Bone, myself, and several other miners decided we wouldn't go into the Viaduct Bar because of a crooked dice dealer there. There were other bars we could drink in; other places we could play. So we had our party, but when it came time to go home we couldn't find Jumbo. Finally I walked down to the Viaduct Bar and went in. There Jumbo was, bellied up to the bar, having a couple of drinks.

I told him it was time to go home but he protested stubbornly, "No, I'm gonna go in the back room and get in the dice game." There was no arguing with him so I left the bar in a hurry and found the rest of the boys and brought them all back to the Viaduct because I knew we were going to have to help Jumbo out of there.

When we came into the bar Jumbo was not in sight so we walked into the back room and found a big game going.

There was pretty good money on the table and Jumbo was standing with a couple dollars worth of 25¢ chips in his hand. He lost a couple of bets and the dice came to him and he started to shoot and lost a couple more bets, but he was still holding the dice and after rolling a couple of craps he came out and made a point.

He was working on that point when the dice dealer changed the dice—not to get the 25¢ that Jumbo had down, but the $500 to $600 being played around the table. Well, when the dealer switched dice, Jumbo went over the table. The dealer grabbed a blackjack and hit Jumbo on the head but Jumbo shook his head and kept coming. He got hold of that dealer and he sure fixed him good.

In the meantime, Carl Wiser and I started in to help Jumbo. I think everybody in the place took a poke at me just for fun. I never did get there. Butt Block got behind the bar and started throwing whiskey bottles. T-Bone didn't see any sense in throwing bottles so he went behind the bar and got four quarts of whiskey and walked out with all that whiskey under his arms and went to the car. When the brawl was over, he was sitting out there good and drunk.

The dice dealer wound up with a broken arm, broken jaw, and was messed up bad, but the crooked dice were there when the sheriff and the marshal came to break up the brawl. The owner of the Viaduct asked Jumbo why he had started the fight. Jumbo said, "This man he cheat me. He change the dice. I want my money back."

The proprietor of the bar offered to give everyone back his money. There was nothing else he could do—the crooked dice were there. He said, "Jumbo, I'll start in with you. How much did you lose?"

Jumbo said, "This man cheat me. I want my money back."

"Well, Jumbo, I will give you your money back," the proprietor said. "How much did you lose?"

"One doler and sewenty-fi cents!" Jumbo roared.

I'LL TELL another story about Jumbo. His partner Shorty was working at their station and Jumbo was up ahead setting timber. He noticed he didn't hear any sound of his partner hammering.

"I tank I go back and have a smoke with him," Martin decided.

As he walked back, he saw Shorty's light on the ground. His partner was trapped. A slide off the footwall had pinned him and was still coming. The timber holding it was slipping aside. Jumbo ran in and started throwing rock. Shorty begged him to go out but Jumbo insisted, "By Gar! I'll go no place without you!"

He threw his shoulders against that timber, moved it just enough to be able to catch Shorty and drag him clear. He carried him like a baby down the drift. When he laid him down, he started to walk farther down the drift, then passed out. He had broken his collar bone, but he had still picked up his partner and carried him clear. Shorty was just skinned up a bit in that accident but Jumbo was in the hospital. He sure hollered a lot about his being hurt and his partner not being fouled up at all!

In '35 I took on Sleepy Collins as a work partner at the Caledonia Mine in Silverton, Colorado. He was a colored fellow from Alabama—one of the only colored miners I have ever known. I took him but I didn't want him. I didn't know anything about him. I didn't want a green hand but the depression was on and I was afraid I might get tramped if I didn't take him.

Sleepy and I worked together from '35 until '48 off and on. We had quite a partnership. He worked for me a lot of the time when I was either foreman or superintendent and when I was digging Sleepy was there with me.

Sometimes his wife would take a shot at him with a shotgun. One time Sleepy came in about two-thirds drunk, put a $20 bill on the kitchen table and said, "I'll bet twenty bucks nobody can shoot me in the rear before I get around the corner of the house." His wife went for the shotgun and Sleepy started to run. He lost that $20 and sure took in a lot of buckshot.

During the fourth shift that Sleepy and I worked together, a big rock fell when I was setting up a machine and broke several bones in my hand. The next morning Sleepy was at the house and told me, "Come on there, Didgie! Let's go to work."

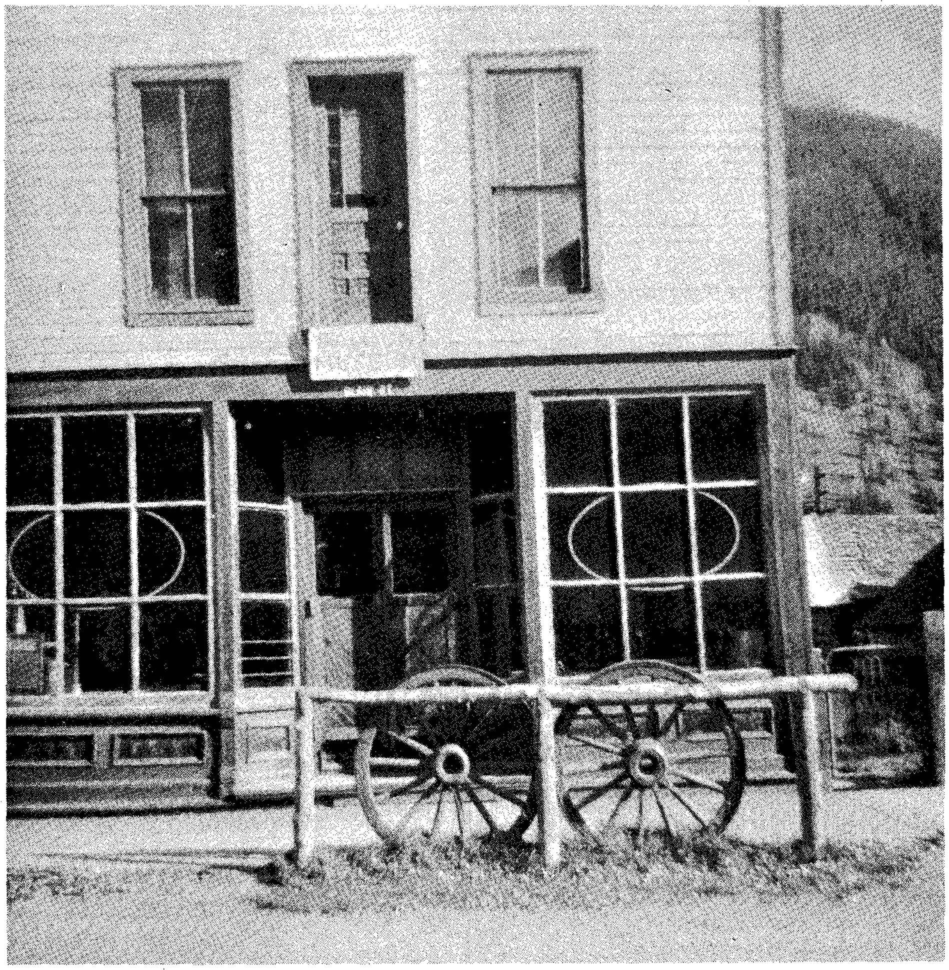
I told him I couldn't work with my hand in a cast but he insisted that if I showed him where to drill and how to set up the machine he could drill as good as I could. I needed the work so we went into the mine together and for five weeks made better footage than any team in the mine. All I did was sit in the crosscut and tell Sleepy where and at what angle to drill and he did all the rest and mucked out too. That was the kind of a partner that colored boy turned out to be!

Sleepy and I worked the Caledonia for about six months and became real good at mining and timbering in soft ground. He figured that when he got into hard ground he could do just as good. He was sure surprised at the first round he drilled! He didn't pull even a good hatful of muck and got mad at me for not showing him how in the first place. I didn't show him because I was afraid he'd give me an argument.

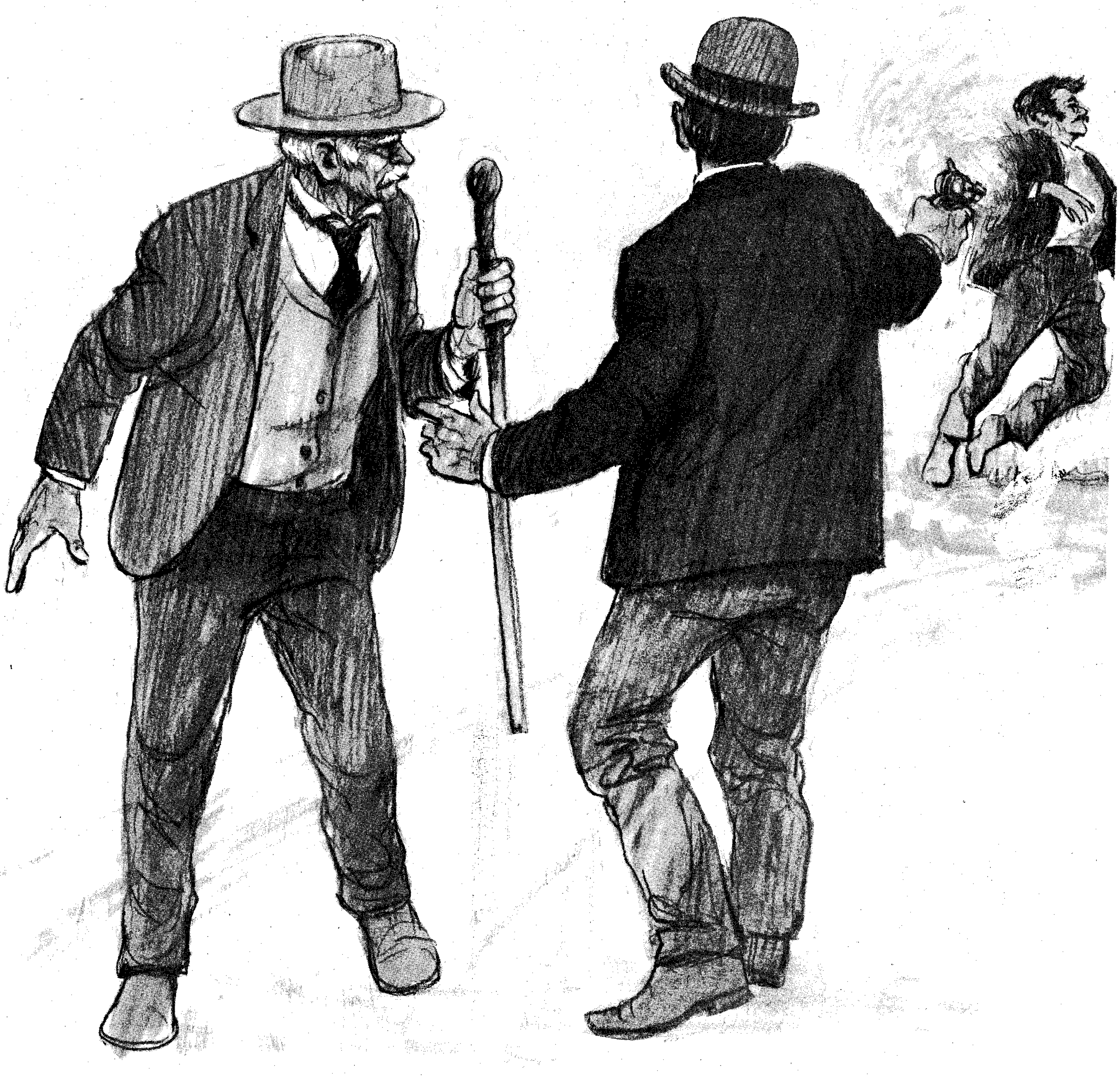
I found out that if I argued with him too much I'd make him mad and he'd be apt as not to slug me. Once when we were working together I said, "I'm sweating just like an Alabama nigger." He knocked me down and told me that there were niggers and colored people and he was an Alabama colored fella and wasn't no nigger. He said there were two kinds of whites too—white people and white trash. Well, he kind of classed me as a white person but sometimes when he

(Continued on page 38)

Silverton, Colorado's old Viaduct Bar, where Carl Wisner and the author rescued Jumbo Martin from a crooked dice game.



GUNPLAY!



This California feud had the classic beginning— boys who had played and grown up together began to eye each other suspiciously, unaware that distrust is only a step away from hate

By **WILLIAM B. SECREST**

Photos Courtesy Author

Illustrated by Paul Hudgins

NEWT WALKER was dead. Shirtless, he lay sprawled face down on the floor of his cabin amid the broken dishes of an overturned kitchen table. Just a few feet away, outside the door, another body lay face down in the yard, the bloody ground and stillness being unmistakable evidence of another violent death.

Officers and grim-faced mountaineers filled the rugged log cabin which had housed the Walker family since the 1860s. Tough men with pistols on their hips speculated about the double murder while standing beneath a time-worn motto hung cheerily on the wall. "God Bless Our Home" it stated simply, as if to mock the tragic old cabin. Jim and Phil Walker, both heavily armed, stood talking grimly to neighbors while peace officers scurried about making their investigations.

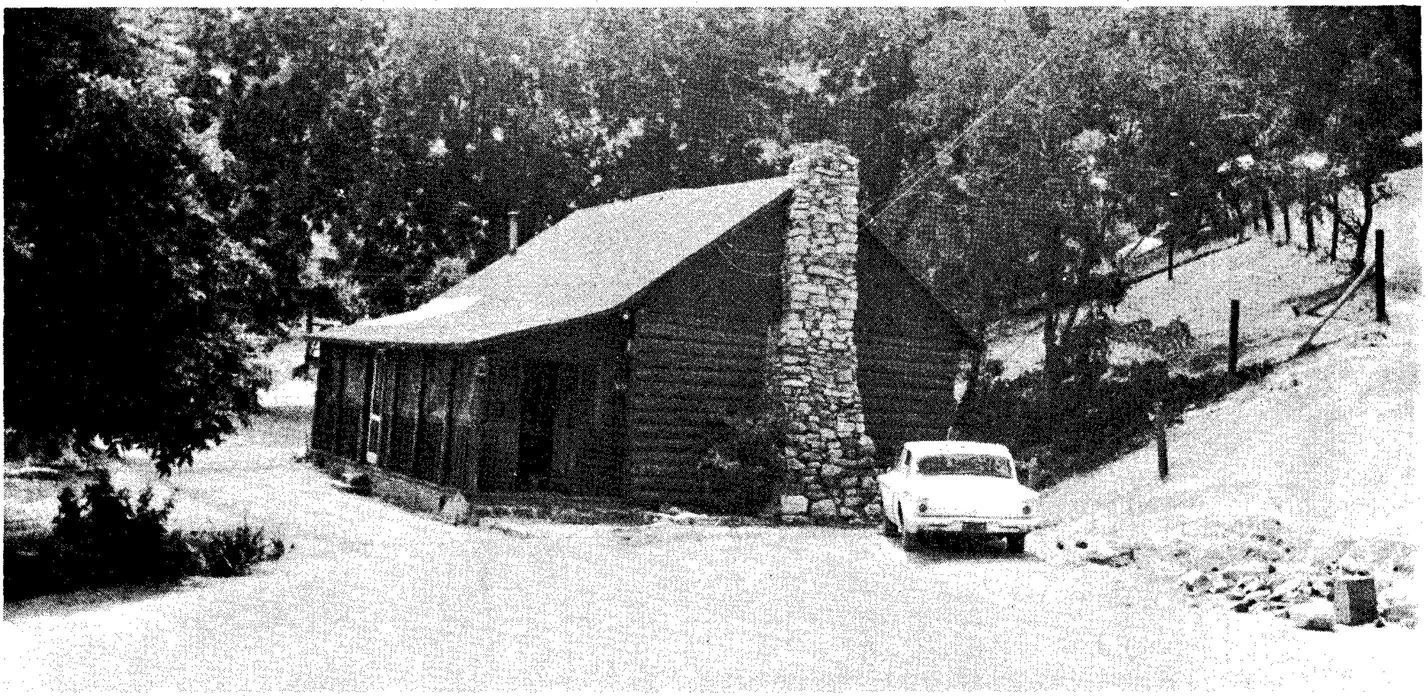
The men with guns, the old cabin situated in the remote mountains east of Bakersfield, California, seemed to suggest a scene from pioneer days. It was still raw country, to be sure, but this was 1924 and a late model car in the front yard contrasted sharply with the weathered Walker cabin.

Inside, the Walker brothers watched silently as a sheet was placed over the body of Newt. A curtain had been drawn on a Kern County legend, and yet a feeling of apprehension seemed to fill the room as if a dreaded anti-climax somehow lurked beyond the cabin door. The "finest pistol shot in the San Joaquin Valley" was dead, but the uneasy glances of his brothers somehow suggested that perhaps a last terrible act was yet to be played.

Gold was the lure of the Kern River Valley, although as early as the 1850s pioneer stockmen had already entered the area. Havilah, Kernville, Whiskey Flat and Keyesville were mining towns established in the aftermath of the 1849 gold rush and were later supply centers for outlying mines and local stockmen. William Brannon Walker had arrived in Keyesville during the mining excitement and by 1866 had built his wife a secure and rambling log house. A typical pioneer, hard-working and industrious, Walker engaged in various local mining activities. Over the years the marriage was blessed with seven sons: Tom, Jim, Hal, Bill, Ben, Phil and "Newt."

John Newton Walker was born August

Walker family cabin built in the 1860s still used today near Keyesville below Greenhorn Mountain.



17, 1871. When he and his brothers grew older, all worked on local cattle ranches or in the mines and all showed a marked interest in firearms. This was the day of the gun, a time when a weapon meant game on the table, protection from a sometimes hostile Nature, and a personal law when a peace officer might be many miles away. All of the boys spent their money on guns and ammunition and their spare time in practicing, and all became experts.

NEIGHBORS to the Walkers in the Kernville area were the Gibson and Burton families, all engaged modestly in mining and farming. The boys of the three families were friendly and grew up together, sometimes working, hunting and fishing in company with each other. The youngsters were toughened by their frontier upbringing but seemed to have gotten along well and by all accounts were popular and good workers.

Sometime in the 1880s a strange figure entered the picture—a long-haired, buckskin-clad character with the curious name of Jack Spratt. How long he had resided in the area isn't known, but he was on friendly terms with both the Burtons and the Walkers despite having a generally bad reputation locally.

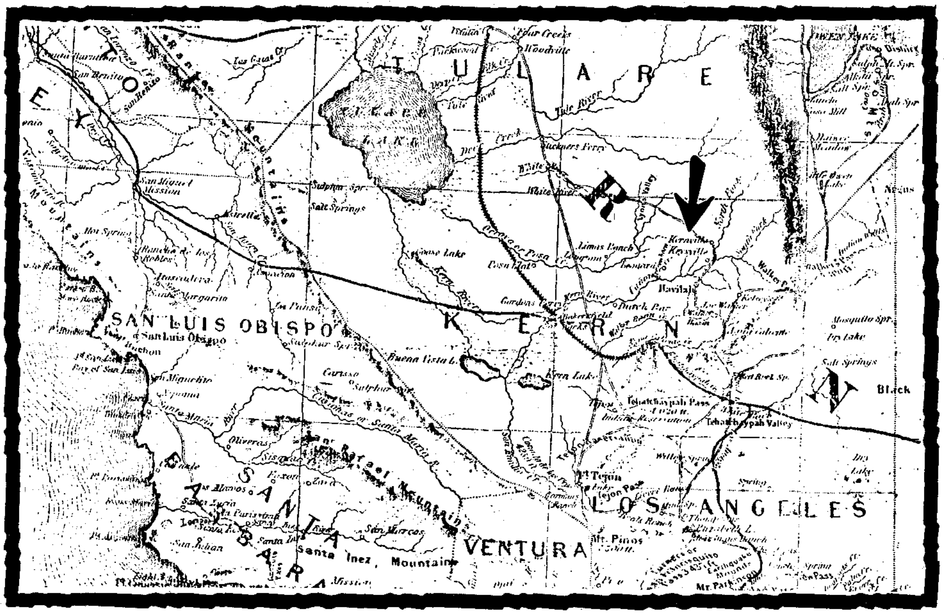
When a Kernville stage was held up and its Wells Fargo box looted, suspicion fell on Fletcher and Jim Burton, although both boys were still in their teens. Just how the two Burtons were implicated is hard to determine, but they blew the whistle on Spratt and he was convicted and sentenced to a long stay in San Quentin. The erstwhile bandit was trundled off mouthing curses at the Burtons and swearing to get them if it was the last thing he ever did. The two Burton boys, whatever their connection had been with the robbery, were industrious and honest both before and after the stagecoach incident. It was unfortunate that a chain of circumstances had been set in motion which would affect their lives for some years to come.

Some of the Walker boys had been on friendly terms with Spratt, and evidently felt that he had taken a rap for the Burtons. A coolness developed between the families, aggravated by a mining dispute which erupted some time later. The Burtons and the Walkers both claimed a mine near Keyesville, but Jim and Fletcher Burton made it known that they intended working the mine in the face of all the Walkers who trod the earth. Both families had mines in the area, and muttered threats and curses were soon intensified by armed men going to and from work.

Bill Gibson and his brother had a farm in Hot Springs Valley and also a part interest in the disputed mine. They were violent partisans of the Walkers, but despite the troubles between the three families, Dave Burton married a sister of the Gibsons sometime in the late 1880s. It must have been a harried and furtive courtship, since the feud seems to have gone from bad to worse as the years went by. By 1891, the time had passed for talk.

ON A COLD winter night of that year, Fletcher Burton was busying himself about his mining cabin as his brother Jim went to Kernville for supplies. Suddenly rifle shots disrupted the calm of the crisp night air and Fletcher Burton sprawled dying on his cabin floor. That same night, as Jim Burton was having a drink in a Kernville saloon, another murderous fusillade cut him down at the bar. The shots were fired through a window and footsteps clattered down the wooden sidewalk and disappeared into the night.

Fletcher Burton was dead, but his brother survived the deadly ambush, although badly wounded. Since Jack Spratt had recently been released from prison and reportedly had been seen in the vicinity, suspicion immediately fastened on him. Officers searched a wide area, but Spratt was nowhere to be seen. It was concluded that he had not been near Kernville and the law soon began looking elsewhere for the killers.



Old Kern County map. Arrow indicates area of the story.

Courtesy Kern County Historical Society

Because of the Gibson brothers' numerous threats against the two Burtons, they were arrested and housed in the Bakersfield jail. They vehemently denied any knowledge of the crime even though they were unable to come up with a satisfactory alibi for the fatal night. Sometime during the Gibsons' stay in jail and their prolonged trial, Ben Walker disappeared from home. Little attention seems to have been paid to this circumstance, however, and the Gibsons were convicted of first degree murder on circumstantial evidence and sentenced to life in San Quentin. Through it all, they stoutly maintained their innocence.

Meanwhile, Jim Burton had recovered from his wounds and further trouble brewed in the hills around Keyesville. Charley Allison had been a mining partner of the Gibsons and had loudly proclaimed their innocence during their trial and later. Burton and Allison were soon discussing each other in unflattering terms, and saloon talk evolved into outright threats.

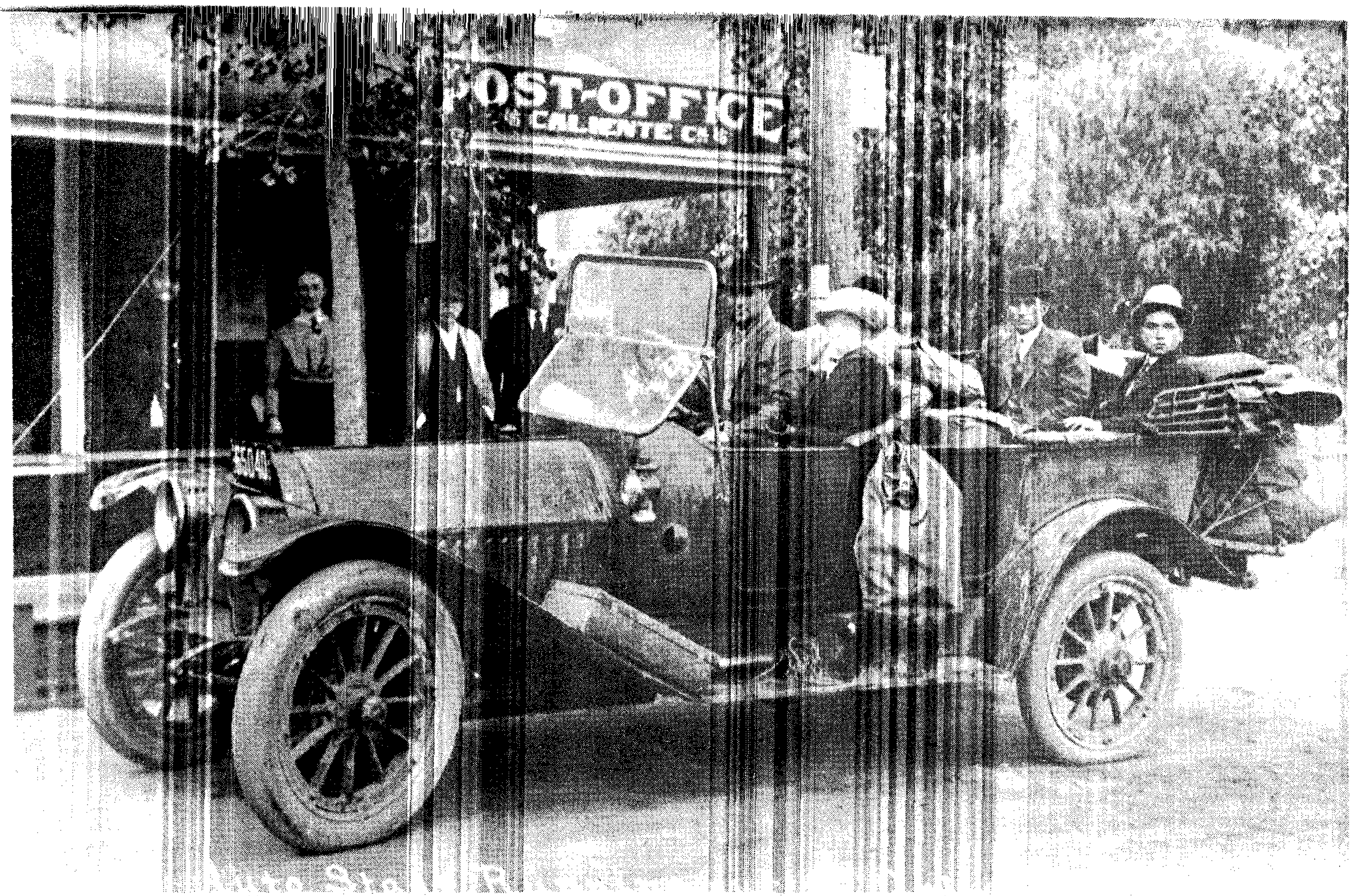
It isn't clear whether the two partisans met by chance or whether the meeting was a more formal affair. Whatever the circumstances, they did meet one day and both men were armed. A miner, resting beside the Kernville stage road, saw Burton and Allison approach each other near the bridge by the old Greenhorn Trail. The witness reported later that the two men circled each other warily, each looking for an opening. Suddenly a pistol shot echoed across the hills and Jim Burton lay dead in a cloud of gunsmoke.

Allison was tried and vigorously prosecuted, but his plea of self-defense was accepted by the jury and he was acquitted. Two Burtons were dead and the feud raged unabated, with both sides threatening vengeance and more bloodshed. The mantle of the Burton family now passed to the two surviving brothers, Dave and Luther.

OVER THE YEARS, the cause of the Gibson brothers attracted more and more attention. The nature of the circumstantial evidence which convicted them, coupled with Ben Walker's disappearance, combined to convince many people that a wrong had been done. A petition signed by the jury members, county officials and other prominent citizens was submitted in their behalf and acted upon favorably by the prison parole board. Soon the two brothers were free again and lived out their lives in peaceful anonymity near Porterville.

A strained coexistence settled over the Kernville community. The Walkers and the Burtons never spoke or had anything to do with one another. Still, a fierce hatred remained, and the feudist's nagging feeling of a score unsettled. In the mountains settlers waited and wondered what turn the troubles might take next, but the powdersmoke showdown was a long time in coming.

The town of Havilah was born with the discovery of gold in 1864. Located between Kernville and Walkers basin, it was a typical mining camp consisting of a dozen or so business buildings sur-



Courtesy Gene Burmeister

Old *stage* station and post *office* at Caliente, *California* about 1912. Horses still were used when Newt Walker and his father left here for Havilah that fateful day in 1905. Pictured are, from left, Lute Hopper, Mr. and Mrs. P. M. Davis, Newt Walker (?), Payton Moore, Edith Swett, Bill Wirth and Frank Vega.

rounded by scattered tents and shacks. It was never much of a town as mining towns went, and when it narrowly lost the Kern County seat election in 1874, Havilah settled down to the slow decline so typical of western boom towns. By 1900 it was a sleepy little supply center, nestled in the foothills and dozing on the perimeter of a rapidly encroaching civilization.

Early in the afternoon of April 24, 1905, the stagecoach from Caliente rattled its way down Havilah's main street and pulled up at the post office. Newt Walker stepped down from the coach and then turned to assist his father. The elder Walker was now seventy-six years old and tragedy no doubt had further lined his rugged, weathered face. The two men were returning from Bakersfield, where on the previous Saturday they had said goodbye to the youngest son and brother of the Walker family. A confessed murderer, young Phil Walker was leaving to begin a life sentence at San Quentin. For the father it had been a pathetic and tearful farewell and their attorney, Rowan Irwin, had reportedly turned to Newt with a stern appeal.

"Newt, let this be a lesson to you. You go home with your father and take care of him and stay out of trouble."

"That's just what I'm going to do," he assertedly replied. "If a man was to kick me in the road, I'd let him get away with it. I want no trouble."

As father and son walked across the street to Gus Miller's store for lunch, Newt noticed three men standing in front of W. L. Dooley's saloon. He spoke briefly to S. H. Gibson but ignored Dave Burton and his friend, George Bagsby. Gibson was a brother-in-law of Burton and a brother of the Gibsons who had recently been pardoned for the murder of Fletcher Burton. Newt and his father went into Miller's store where they purchased some sardines and crackers for lunch.

Outside on the street, Gibson turned and went into the saloon while Burton and Bagsby followed the Walkers into Miller's store. It was a few minutes later that Hubbel, Havilah's blacksmith, looked up from his chores and noticed some men standing on Miller's porch. He watched unconcernedly as two of them walked up the street toward Kernville, followed quickly by Dave Burton and Bagsby.

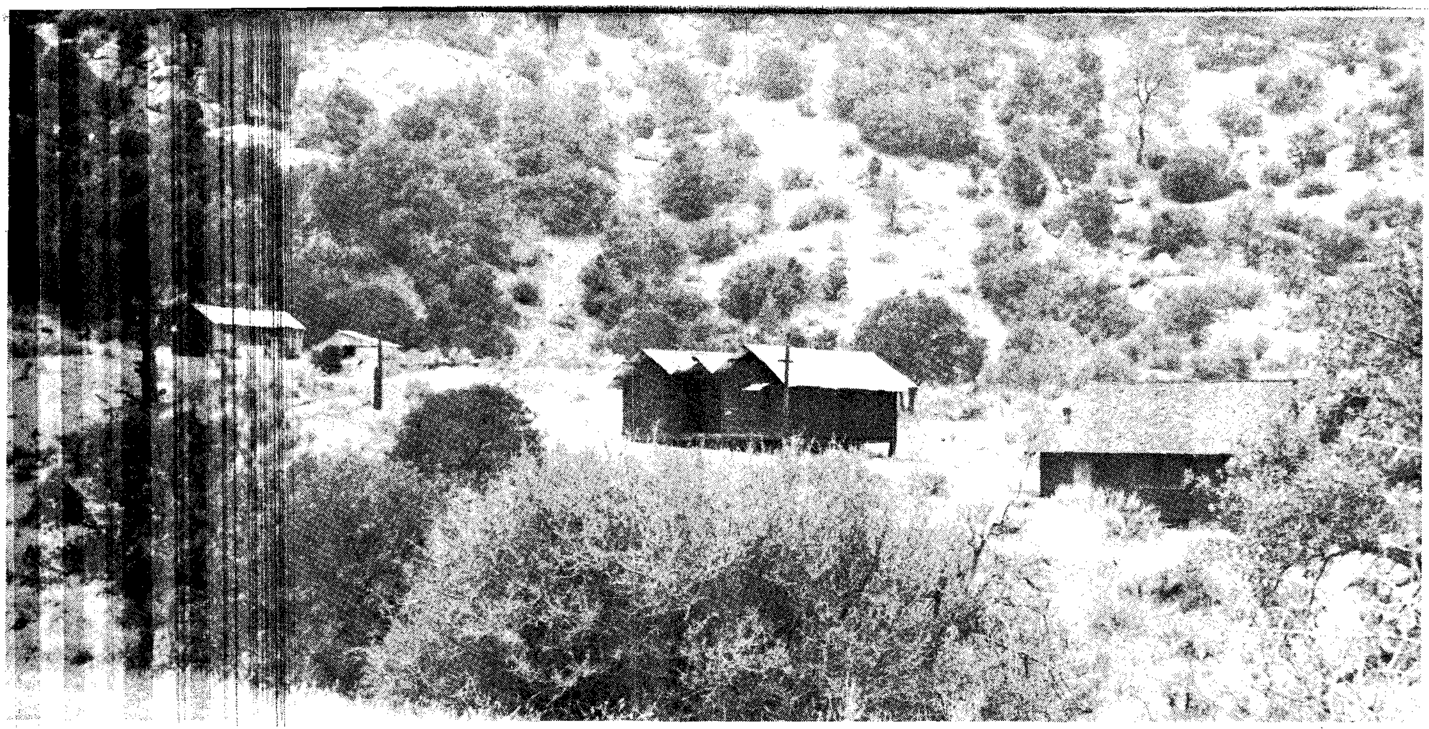
Hubbel gasped in shocked disbelief as the two groups suddenly began shooting at each other. In a moment the fight was over and two figures lay sprawled in the rutted road. Newt Walker stepped quickly to his father's side as the old man gazed down at the dead or dying Burton and Bagsby. After reloading, Newt holstered his pistol and grasped the elder Walker's hand. They talked briefly, then Newt walked quickly in the direction of Kernville.

YOUNG WALKER had no sooner disappeared into the mountains than county officers were on his trail. Deputy Constable Gonzales of Kernville was already tracking him as Sheriff Kelly and the Kern County coroner hurried to the scene from Bakersfield. Arriving in Havilah at 11 o'clock the next morning, Kelly was joined by Constable Johnnie Swett, and the two men went directly to the Walker cabin at Keyesville. It was generally feared that Newt might be joined by his brother in the mountains, and when Jim showed up in Havilah the day after the shooting, he was detained by the officers.

The Bakersfield *Californian* gave the double killing a big splash and in the prejudicial reporting typical of those days tried and convicted Newt before the facts of the case were even known. Large black headlines proclaimed him a desperado and murderer, the first reports of the shooting stating that Newt had shot down his victims with no provocation whatsoever.

A hint that something was involved other than cold-blooded murder came out during the coroner's inquest on the 26th. During an all-day session, the jury returned a verdict that "the deceased came to their deaths from gunshot wounds at the hands of Newt Walker." It was significant that three of the jurors wanted to bring in a verdict of justifiable homicide, but the rest of the jury insisted that the courts must decide the guilt or innocence of the accused.

Meanwhile, Newt was still at large in the hills between Havilah and Kern-



Weathered shacks are the only remains of the once-booming gold town of Keyesville.

ville. Sheriff Kelly and Constable Swett remained on his trail amid wild speculation as to what would happen when a confrontation took place. Within the few preceding years, two of the most desperate outlaws in the West had come to a horrible end and inevitably these two men were now compared with Newt Walker.

In 1902 Harry Tracy had committed suicide in a wheat field new Creston, Washington when a posse tracked him down after his escape from an Oregon penitentiary. His freedom had lasted less than two months and he had killed ten men during his flight, which was heralded even in the New York newspapers.

Locally, the desperado Jim McKinney had been shot to death in a Bakersfield joss house after a wild gun battle in 1903. He killed two officers before he himself died in a blaze of gunfire. "When I get started, McKinney won't be in it," the *Californian* quoted Newt Walker as once saying. The story went on to quote one who "knows him (Walker) well": "If Newt Walker killed those men in cold blood he will never stop fighting until he is killed. He has long had an ambition to emulate Tracy and McKinney and he has boasted that some day he would get a lot of his enemies and make a record that would surpass either of the noted outlaws named."

Despite the predicted bloody finale to the Havilah drama, the chase ended quietly when Newt surrendered the day after the shooting.

KELLY and Swett had met Joe Ferris, Newt's mining partner, at the Isabella stage station. Ferris had informed them that Walker was in the hills and was prepared to surrender himself and his pistol to the officers. At eight o'clock on the evening of April 25, Newt Walker strode up to the sheriff and gave himself up.

"I have lots of enemies in that country," Newt was to comment later, "and I made up my mind not to surrender to any of the officers there. I declared I would surrender to the sheriff and I waited for Mr. Kelly to come and give myself up."

The sheriff was praised in the local press for his wise course of action in hunting the fugitive. A wild-eyed posse almost certainly would have precipitated more bloodshed and brought fruition to the dire predictions of the sensation-seekers.

Newt and Sheriff Kelly reached Bakersfield on the same day that the bodies of Burton and Bagsby arrived in town. Dr. Newberry, who conducted the autopsy, declared that all of the men's wounds but one were fatal. Burton had been shot twice through the body, the wounds being within inches of each other. Bagsby, too, received two bullets through the body, with each wound also within two inches of each other. A third shot had struck Bagsby in the right hip, inflicting a flesh wound, and the bullet was found in his clothes. By all accounts, some fast and accurate gunplay had been seen that day in old Havilah. Just how fast was yet to be seen.

By now it had been established that of the two dead men, only Bagsby had been armed during the shoot-out. Newt adamantly insisted the battle was a case of self-defense, however, and he maintained that when the facts were known it would be found a justifiable shooting. His version of the affair, as given to the press, was substantially as follows: "We went into Miller's store, my father and I, and bought a can of sardines and some crackers, of which to make a light luncheon. We had paid our fare to Havilah on the stage and expected to walk on to Keyesville. While we were sitting down eating, Bagsby and Burton passed by the door. They saw us inside and came in. They walked around the room and made remarks to each other, Burton to the effect that the Burtons always come out on top and that he was not afraid of anybody. I asked if that remark was intended for me, and he said I could take it as I pleased.

"My father said that we did not want any trouble and that we had better go, so we went out into the street and Burton said, 'What was that last remark you made?' We had started up the road and they were apparently following us. I was looking back over my shoulder. I saw Bagsby with his hand on his pistol and the weapon partly drawn. I turned and fired at the two men in quick succession, killing them both." From the ground, Bagsby had fired three shots before dying.

When questioned, the sheriff stated that there had been three witnesses to the shooting but that none of them had yet been located. "From what I could gather of the statements that the three other men had made," continued the lawman, "their story tallies with that told both by the old man and by Newt himself."

WALKER'S arraignment and preliminary examination were held early in May and the case was called in Superior Court on June 5, 1905. After various delays, a jury was selected and the trial commenced on June 13. District Attorney Laird and Deputy District Attorney Coil were assisted in the prosecution by special prosecutor G. L. Sanders of Los Angeles, who had been employed by Dave Burton's mother. The law firm of Emmons and Irwin represented Walker, who was to be tried first for the Burton killing. With Burton's mother and two sisters seated behind the prosecution and the elder Walker leaning on the rail behind his son, the stage was set for the final act of the drama. Strangely, Burton's widow was not seated with her mother and sisters-in-law.

For the next few days a parade of witnesses told what they knew of the gunfight. L. G. Dye had driven the stage into Havilah that day and had stuck his head out of the stage barn when the shooting started. Both men were already on the ground, and when Bagsby began shooting Dye ducked back in the barn.

Several other witnesses were called, and the coroner and Dr. Newberry testified as to the wounds the dead men had received. Dooley, the Havilah saloon owner; Hubbel, the blacksmith; and S. H. Gibson all gave their version of the affair, which in the main verified the defendant's story. Gus Miller, the storekeeper in whose place the trouble had started, testified as to what he could recall of the incident. The witnesses previously mentioned by Sheriff Kelly were located and their testimony also served to verify the defense's preliminary statement.

On the fourth day of the trial, a mountain resident named Carl Pascoe made some remarks concerning an alleged holdup of the Kernville stage. The incident referred to had taken place the previous March when both Burton and Bagsby had been passengers. It was stated that Newt Walker had tried to stop the coach, but before the details of the incident could be developed, Judge Mahon ruled it immaterial and the question was dropped. More was to come out later, however, as the crowded courtroom waited impatiently for the defense to begin.

On the morning of June 16, the defense fired its first theoretical guns of the trial. The big stumbling block to the defense plea of justifiable homicide was the fact that Dave Burton was unarmed at the time of the battle. Two witnesses were introduced to prove that Newt Walker had every right to assume that Burton was indeed armed when the encounter took place. William Yates testified that he had been in Havilah that day and had seen Burton and Bagsby at Brown's store. The two men were talking while Burton held and patted a pistol in his hand. This took place after the stage had arrived.

Another witness, Ephraim Williams, a miner who lived in Havilah, testified that he saw Burton and Bagsby a few minutes before they entered Miller's store and that Burton had a pistol in his hip pocket. It seems obvious that Burton had given the pistol to Bagsby before entering the store, but of course Walker could not have known this.

A HUSH FELL over the crowded courtroom as Newt Walker was sworn in and took the witness stand. He was an imposing figure, and in a clear, firm voice began the story of the events for which he was now on trial for his life.

"My name is John Newton Walker. I knew David Burton; we were boys together. I did not know Bagsby [but] had seen him before. Burton and I did not speak, though we met frequently. We had not spoken for twelve years.

"I knew Dave Ingram. I had a conversation with him a year ago. Ingram told *me* that Dave Burton said there wasn't room enough at the bar for him [Walker] and Burton to stand together. Burton said there were trails in the mountains where he would meet him [Walker] and when they did meet, one of them would die and that one would be Walker."

Continuing his recital, Walker told of getting off the stage that day in Havilah and of speaking to Bert Gibson. As the two Walkers strolled over to Miller's store, Newt noticed that Burton was armed with a pistol in his hip pocket.

"Burton and Bagsby came in while we were eating lunch. They walked around. They bought nothing. They ate no lunch. Burton talked some and took up a paper. Bagsby went to the door and said, 'Dave, how would you like to have this tall gangling ———— hold us up today?' Burton said, 'It would be a good time. We've got bullion for him today.' Bagsby said, 'No Walker — — — could hold me up and get away with it.'

"I turned and said, 'I didn't hold up no stage,' and I started on. I saw that Bagsby had his pistol *in* his hand, the weapon being in his pocket. After I started, Bagsby again said, 'Hold on, we want you.' "

By now Walker had risen from his chair and was actually acting out the movements of that deadly afternoon. "I turned again and Burton then put his hand towards his hip pocket. Then I wheeled and began to fire. My recollection is that I shot Bagsby first. I thought I was going to be shot down right then and there. I never tried to hold up any stage in March or at any other time."

When District Attorney Laird stepped up to cross-examine the witness, his first questions concerned the stage incident. Although no stage had been held up, the prosecution was evidently trying to prove that Walker had planned to hold up the stage and changed his mind at the last minute. Or that he had planned to take a shot at Burton who, with Bagsby, was a passenger on the coach. Walker calmly related how he had not recognized anyone on the stage that day and had merely stopped by the road to take off his shoes when the stage had passed by.

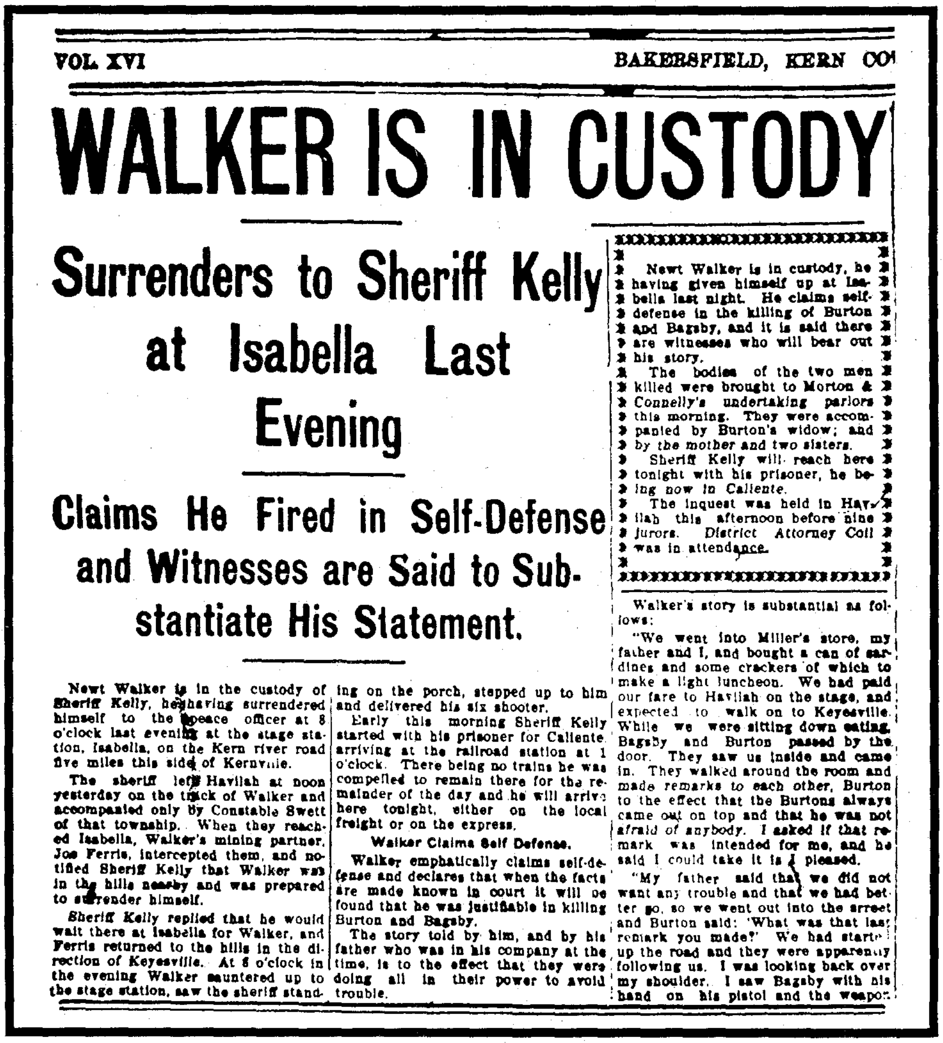
The prosecutor tried to delve into the Walker-Burton feud troubles of some twelve years past, but the court ruled the questioning irrelevant.

Under rigid cross-examination, Newt stuck steadily by his story. One point which the prosecution hammered on was the seeming impossibility of Walker's being able to draw and kill both men after Bagsby had already begun to draw his own pistol. Walker insisted, however, that he had not gone into action until Bagsby had started his draw and Dave Burton had reached for his hip pocket. Determined to break down the defendant's story, the district attorney told Newt to stand up and put on his holster and pistol so as to demostrate the action of that day. With defense attorney Em-

(Continued on page 62)

Walker-Burton gunplay at Havilah was big news for Bakersfield papers.

Courtesy Kern County Library



VOL. XVI BAKERSFIELD, KERN CO

WALKER IS IN CUSTODY

Surrenders to Sheriff Kelly at Isabella Last Evening

Claims He Fired in Self-Defense and Witnesses are Said to Substantiate His Statement.

Newt Walker is in custody, he having given himself up at Isabella last night. He claims self-defense in the killing of Burton and Bagsby, and it is said there are witnesses who will bear out his story.

The bodies of the two men killed were brought to Morton & Connelly's undertaking parlors this morning. They were accompanied by Burton's widow; and by the mother and two sisters.

Sheriff Kelly will reach here tonight with his prisoner, he being now in Caliente.

The inquest was held in Havilah this afternoon before nine jurors. District Attorney Coll was in attendance.

Newt Walker is in the custody of Sheriff Kelly, he having surrendered himself to the peace officer at 8 o'clock last evening at the stage station, Isabella, on the Kern river road five miles this side of Kernville.

The sheriff left Havilah at noon yesterday on the track of Walker and accompanied only by Constable Swett of that township. When they reached Isabella, Walker's mining partner, Joe Ferris, intercepted them, and notified Sheriff Kelly that Walker was in the hills nearby and was prepared to surrender himself.

Sheriff Kelly replied that he would wait there at Isabella for Walker, and Ferris returned to the hills in the direction of Keyesville. At 8 o'clock in the evening Walker sauntered up to the stage station, saw the sheriff standing on the porch, stepped up to him and delivered his six shooter.

Early this morning Sheriff Kelly started with his prisoner for Caliente, arriving at the railroad station at 1 o'clock. There being no trains he was compelled to remain there for the remainder of the day and he will arrive here tonight, either on the local freight or on the express.

Walker Claims Self Defense.

Walker emphatically claims self-defense and declares that when the facts are made known in court it will be found that he was justifiable in killing Burton and Bagsby.

The story told by him, and by his father who was in his company at the time, is to the effect that they were doing all in their power to avoid trouble.

Walker's story is substantial as follows:

"We went into Miller's store, my father and I, and bought a can of sardines and some crackers of which to make a light luncheon. We had paid our fare to Havilah on the stage, and expected to walk on to Keyesville. While we were sitting down eating, Bagsby and Burton passed by the door. They saw us inside and came in. They walked around the room and made remarks to each other, Burton to the effect that the Burtons always came out on top and that he was not afraid of anybody. I asked if that remark was intended for me, and he said I could take it as I pleased.

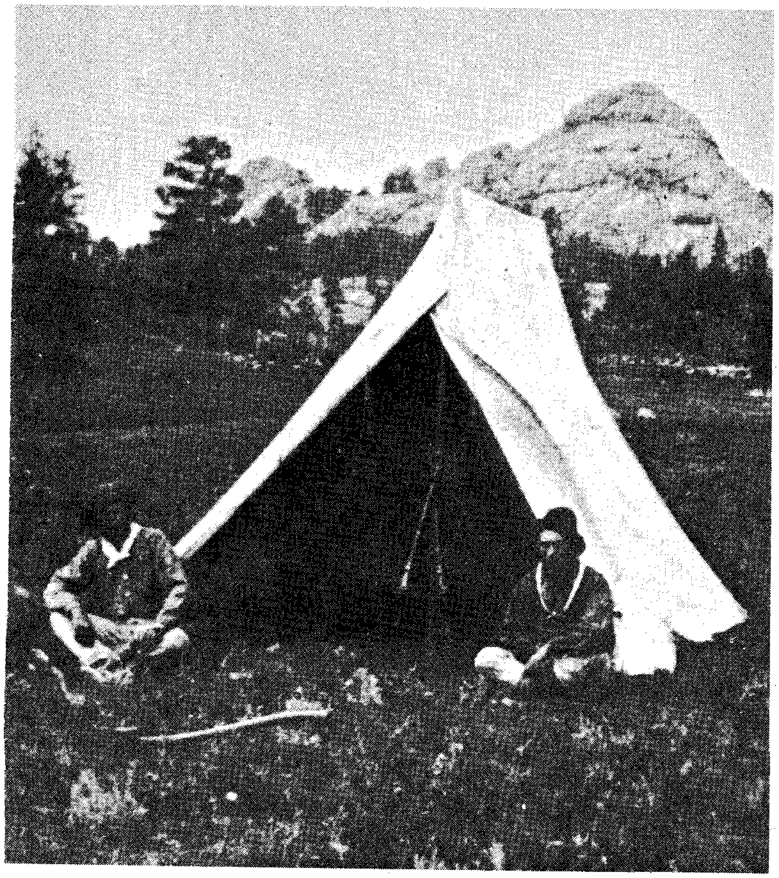
"My father said that we did not want any trouble and that we had better go, so we went out into the street and Burton said: 'What was that last remark you made?' We had started up the road and they were apparently following us. I was looking back over my shoulder. I saw Bagsby with his hand on his pistol and the weapon

REPORTING A GOLD

When a gold-seeking
Black Hills in 1875, two young
story of one of the major

By OLIVER KNIGHT

Photos These Pages Courtesy South Dakota Historical Society



Lieutenant-Colonel Richard I. Dodge, above, commander of the military escort on the Jenney-Newton Expedition. Below, encamped on the way to seek gold. The man at right bears a strong resemblance to known photos of the expedition's guide, California Joe Milner.

UNFORTUNATELY for the craft, most important gold discoveries in the West occurred without the benefit of prior arrangements for press facilities. Despite this heedlessness by the sour-smelling individuals who found gold, newspapers managed to improvise with second-hand information for their initial accounts.

With one exception. Newspaper reporters happened—by prior arrangement—to be on the ground with first-hand accounts of one of the major gold strikes, the Black Hills of Dakota. Two groups of reporters told the story. Five reporters accompanied General George A. Custer's swish-and-fly expedition of 1874, on which the first Black Hills gold was washed. The next summer, two other reporters chronicled the government's gulch-by-gulch determination that there was gold in those hills, which is not quite the cliché it might sound because one does not sensibly make light of gold, especially when it is found in hills belonging to the family of Sitting Bull and Crazy Horse.

Although their stories helped set in motion the Black Hills gold rush of 1874-76, they had been anticipated by another newspaperman, Charles Collins, an Irish adventurer who edited the Sioux City *Daily Times.* One could rightly say that the Black Hills episode began in 1871 when Collins interviewed Father DeSmet upon the missionary's return from Sioux country. From the Jesuit, Collins learned of valuable mineral deposits in the Black Hills. From then on he drummed the story of Black Hills wealth and did everything humanly possible to get miners into the area, with or without government sanction.

Truth and fancy combined thereafter to produce many stories that the barely known hills contained gold. But nobody would go after it. The land belonged to the Sioux. Not only had a treaty in 1868 affirmed their ownership, it had prohibited unauthorized whites from entering the area for any reason. Paradoxically, however, the Sioux did not even live in the Black Hills because of the summer thunderstorms; but the Hills were their sacred *Pa Sapa* nonetheless.

As the gold stories lengthened, Custer received clearance to lead an exploring expedition in the summer of 1874 with orders to be back in sixty days. Leaving Fort Abraham Lin-

RUSH

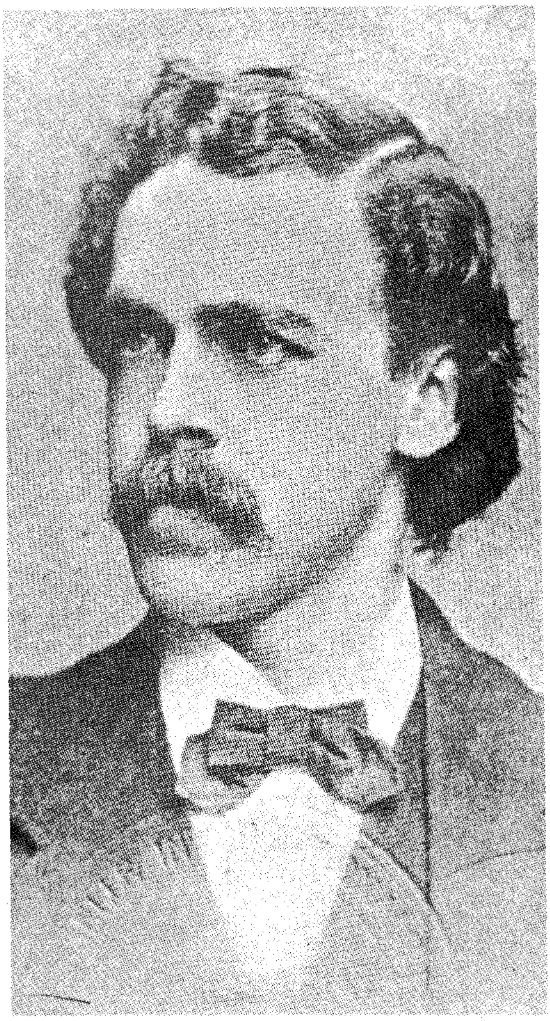
**expedition entered the
reporters were along to tell the
strikes in the American West**

coln near Bismarck with his 7th Cavalry, Custer took a scientific corps, including a geologist, Prof. N. H. Winchell of the University of Minnesota. He also took two practical miners with him.

Col. Clement A. Lounsberry, owner of the Bismarck *Tribune* and a close friend of Custer, maintained that the scientists were supposed to disprove the stories of rich gold fields and was "quite certain" the mining party had not been authorized.

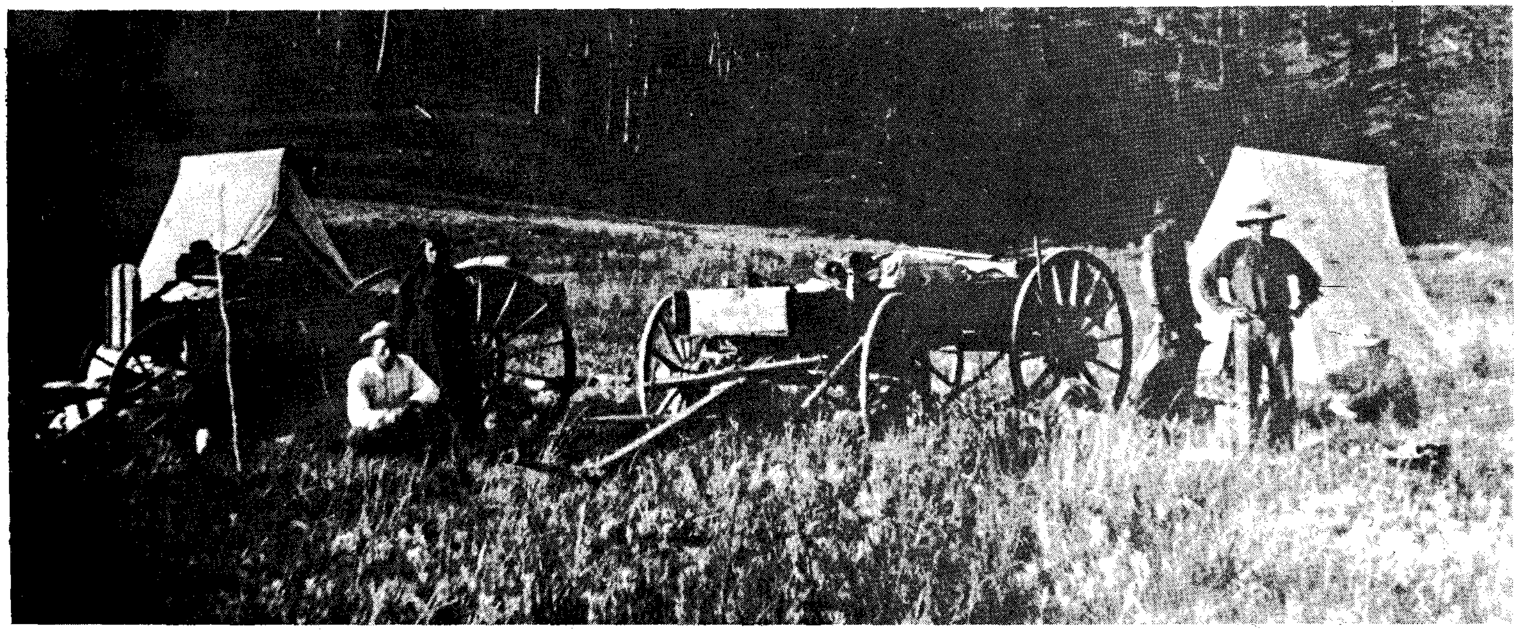
Certainly conflicting interests were at work. On one side were the friends of the Indian, including those who wished him well and those who did well by him through graft. It would have been to their interest to keep the Black Hills unquestionably under Indian title. On the other side were the ever-present expansionists.

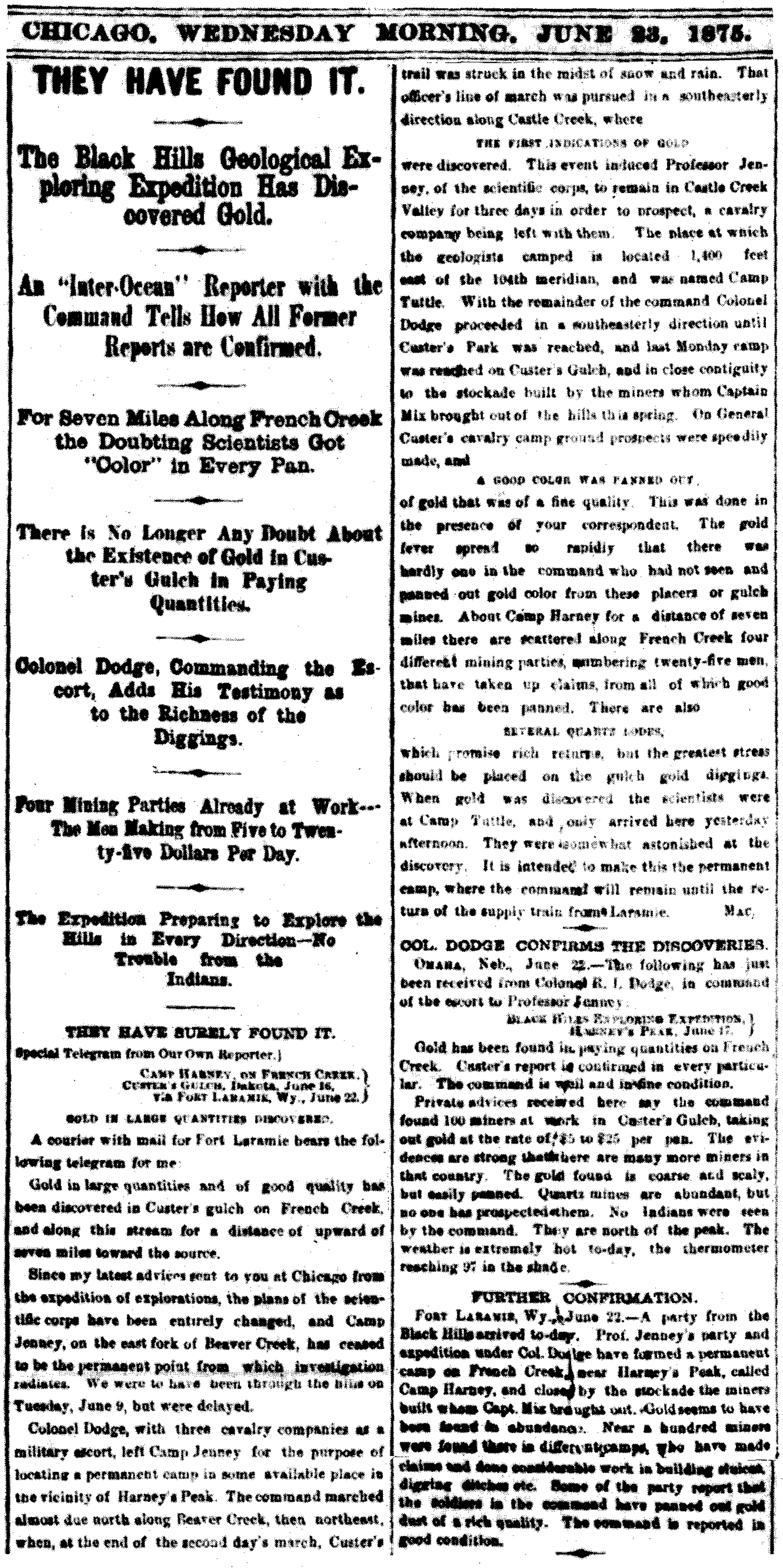
Five reporters went with Custer: William Eleroy Curtis of the Chicago *Inter Ocean*, later to become the first director of what now is the Organization of American States; Samuel June Barrows of the New York *Tribune*, later to become a Unitarian clergyman best remembered for his work in prison reform; Nathan H. Knappen of the Bismarck *Tribune;* Fred



Walter P. Jenney, chief geologist of the 1875 Black Hills gold expedition.

With Jenney and Newton on the trail. The woman standing at left most likely is the famous Calamity Jane Cannary, who accompanied the expedition. Civilians at right possibly include journalists MacMillan and Davenport and members of the geological party.





CHICAGO, WEDNESDAY MORNING, JUNE 23, 1875.

THEY HAVE FOUND IT.

The Black Hills Geological Exploring Expedition Has Discovered Gold.

An "Inter-Ocean" Reporter with the Command Tells How All Former Reports are Confirmed.

For Seven Miles Along French Creek the Doubting Scientists Got "Color" in Every Pan.

There is No Longer Any Doubt About the Existence of Gold in Custer's Gulch in Paying Quantities.

Colonel Dodge, Commanding the Escort, Adds His Testimony as to the Richness of the Diggings.

Four Mining Parties Already at Work---The Men Making from Five to Twenty-five Dollars Per Day.

The Expedition Preparing to Explore the Hills in Every Direction—No Trouble from the Indians.

THEY HAVE SURELY FOUND IT.

Special Telegram from Our Own Reporter.]

CAMP HARNEY, ON FRENCH CREEK,
CUSTER'S GULCH, Dakota, June 16,
VIA FORT LARAMIE, Wy., June 22.

GOLD IN LARGE QUANTITIES DISCOVERED.

A courier with mail for Fort Laramie bears the following telegram for me:

Gold in large quantities and of good quality has been discovered in Custer's gulch on French Creek, and along this stream for a distance of upward of seven miles toward the source.

Since my latest advices sent to you at Chicago from the expedition of explorations, the plans of the scientific corps have been entirely changed, and Camp Jenney, on the east fork of Beaver Creek, has ceased to be the permanent point from which investigation radiates. We were to have been through the hills on Tuesday, June 9, but were delayed.

Colonel Dodge, with three cavalry companies as a military escort, left Camp Jenney for the purpose of locating a permanent camp in some available place in the vicinity of Harney's Peak. The command marched almost due north along Beaver Creek, then northeast, when, at the end of the second day's march, Custer's trail was struck in the midst of snow and rain. That officer's line of march was pursued in a southeasterly direction along Castle Creek, where

THE FIRST INDICATIONS OF GOLD

were discovered. This event induced Professor Jenney, of the scientific corps, to remain in Castle Creek Valley for three days in order to prospect, a cavalry company being left with them. The place at which the geologists camped is located 1,400 feet east of the 104th meridian, and was named Camp Tuttle. With the remainder of the command Colonel Dodge proceeded in a southeasterly direction until Custer's Park was reached, and last Monday camp was reached on Custer's Gulch, and in close contiguity to the stockade built by the miners whom Captain Mix brought out of the hills this spring. On General Custer's cavalry camp ground prospects were speedily made, and

A GOOD COLOR WAS PANNED OUT,

of gold that was of a fine quality. This was done in the presence of your correspondent. The gold fever spread so rapidly that there was hardly one in the command who had not seen and panned out gold color from these placers or gulch mines. About Camp Harney for a distance of seven miles there are scattered along French Creek four different mining parties, numbering twenty-five men, that have taken up claims, from all of which good color has been panned. There are also

SEVERAL QUARTZ LODES,

which promise rich returns, but the greatest stress should be placed on the gulch gold diggings. When gold was discovered the scientists were at Camp Tuttle, and only arrived here yesterday afternoon. They were somewhat astonished at the discovery. It is intended to make this the permanent camp, where the command will remain until the return of the supply train from Laramie. MAC.

COL. DODGE CONFIRMS THE DISCOVERIES.

OMAHA, Neb., June 22.—The following has just been received from Colonel R. I. Dodge, in command of the escort to Professor Jenney:

BLACK HILLS EXPLORING EXPEDITION,
HARNEY'S PEAK, June 17.

Gold has been found in paying quantities on French Creek. Custer's report is confirmed in every particular. The command is well and in fine condition.

Private advices received here say the command found 100 miners at work in Custer's Gulch, taking out gold at the rate of $5 to $25 per pan. The evidences are strong that there are many more miners in that country. The gold found is coarse and scaly, but easily panned. Quartz mines are abundant, but no one has prospected them. No Indians were seen by the command. They are north of the peak. The weather is extremely hot to-day, the thermometer reaching 97 in the shade.

FURTHER CONFIRMATION.

FORT LARAMIE, Wy., June 22.—A party from the Black Hills arrived to-day. Prof. Jenney's party and expedition under Col. Dodge have formed a permanent camp on French Creek, near Harney's Peak, called Camp Harney, and close by the stockade the miners built whom Capt. Mix brought out. Gold seems to have been found in abundance. Near a hundred miners were found there in different camps, who have made claims and done considerable work in building sluices, digging ditches etc. Some of the party report that the soldiers in the command have panned out gold dust of a rich quality. The command is reported in good condition.

Courtesy Newberry Library, Chicago

Thomas C. MacMillan's historic telegraph dispatch as it appeared in Chicago's INTER OCEAN on Wednesday, June 23, 1875, followed by confirmations from Col. Dodge and an unknown reporter at Fort Laramie, Wyoming.

Courtesy Chicago Public Library

Thomas C. MacMillan about 1900 when he was clerk of the U.S. District Court in Chicago. He had been with the INTER OCEAN two and a half years when he took the assignment of covering the Jenney-Newton Expedition in 1875.

Powers of the St. Paul *Press;* and A. B. Donaldson, a University of Minnesota professor representing the St. Paul *Pioneer.*

Custer circled out to the west and then entered the Black Hills from that direction, blazing a trail the Sioux called the Thieves Road. On August 3 he sent by courier to Fort Laramie a telegraphic report that his miners had found gold.

The courier also took a story for Knappen, a three-paragraph dispatch which appeared in the weekly Bismarck *Tribune* on August 12. In later years a version became current that Curtis "scooped" the story with a dispatch which appeared in the *Inter Ocean* on August 27. Actually, the story had appeared in several papers by that time.

From the beginning Lounsberry had to fight to maintain his frontier weekly's triumph against the claims of big city papers. In the *Tribune* he wrote:

"It should be borne in mind that the *Tribune* reporter has better facilities than any other. He is in the 'mess' with the explorers [Lounsberry meant the miners], and was instructed to go with them, and take off his coat, and dig, if necessary—in any event, in the very nature of things, he will come in possession of information kept from others, because the explorers promise to report only to the Commanding officer, but their knowledge can not be kept from our correspondent, because he is one among them—sleeps with them, and eats with them."

However, the reporters with Custer could give only the barest of information—simply that gold had been found—because the in-and-out-again swiftness of Custer's march did not allow time for definitive prospecting.

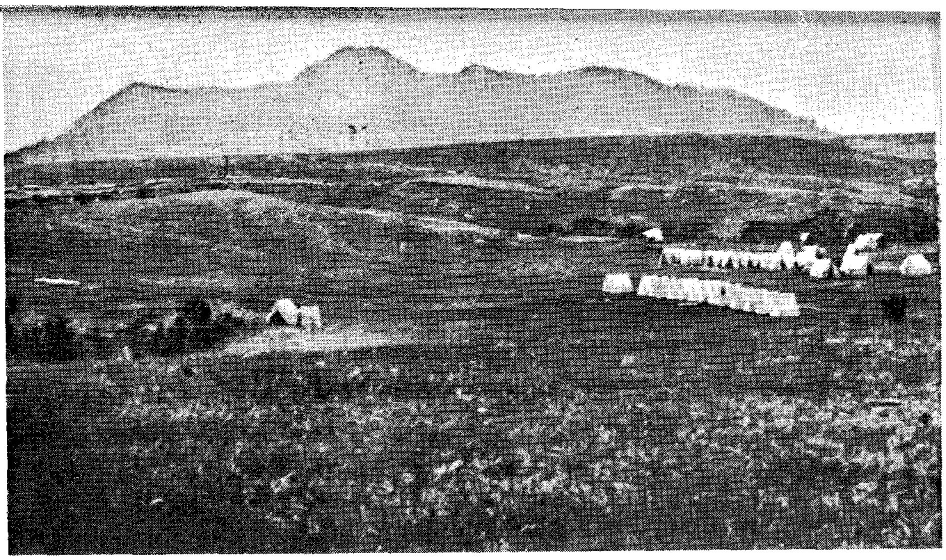
But the news was enough to cause excitement. Collins at once combined with

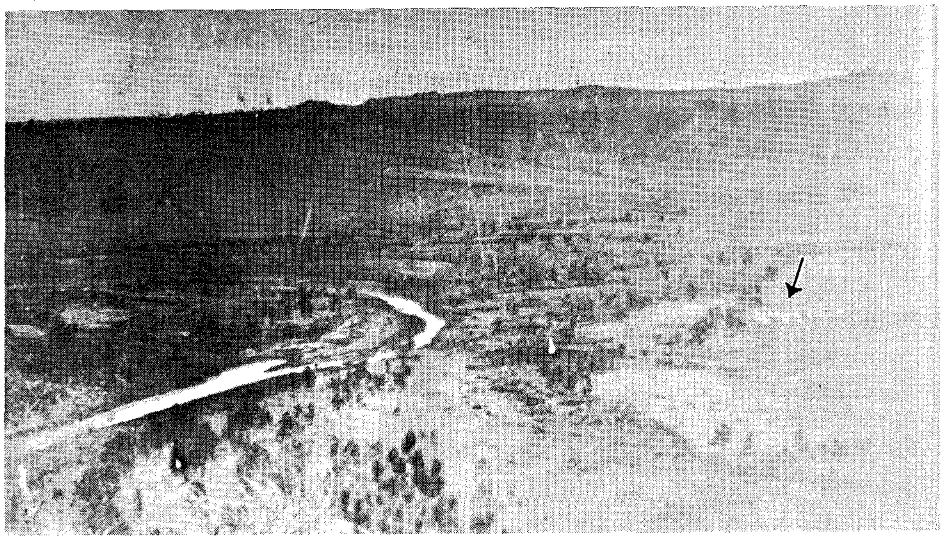
Capt. T. H. Russell to send a party of miners into the Black Hills in spite of the government's prohibition. Captained by Tom Gordon, the small band reached the area where Custer City later was built, erected the Gordon Stockade, and wintered there. Came spring, and the cavalry and the miners went back home under military escort.

DURING THE FALL and winter, the truth of Custer's report was challenged. The geologist Winchell said he had seen neither gold nor gold-bearing quartz. And a missionary to the Sioux said there was no evidence of gold in the Black Hills.

Unable to reconcile the conflicting reports, President Grant decided to send out a scientific expedition in the summer of 1875 to determine the facts. Headed by Walter P. Jenney as geologist in charge and Henry Newton as assistant geologist, the expedition outfitted at Cheyenne. Late in May it moved northeastward to Fort Laramie to rendezvous with the military escort of about 500 men. Commanded by Col. R. I. Dodge and with California Joe Milner serving as guide, the military escort consisted of six cavalry and two infantry companies plus a howitzer and Gatling gun.

At Fort Laramie two newspaper reporters joined the expedition. They were to have the rare assignment of observing and reporting a gold rush at the same time they were covering a government expedition which was supposed to find out whether there was any gold for the rush to rush to. They were Thomas C. MacMillan of the Chicago *Inter Ocean* and Reuben Briggs Davenport of the New York *Herald.* They were young men—Davenport twenty-three, MacMillan twenty-five. Their copy showed it.



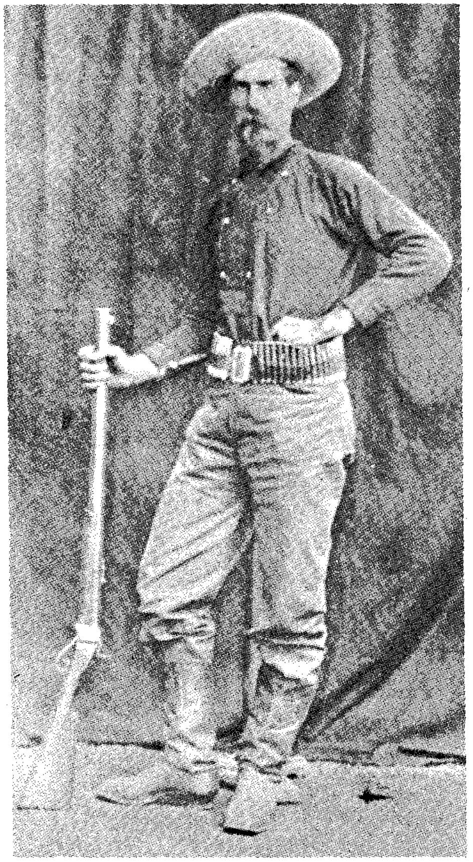


Courtesy South Dakota Historical Society

Two views of portions of the Jenney-Newton Expedition camped in the Black Hills. In bottom photo, tents are at center right near one of the many creeks in the area. Unfortunately, the photographer who took the rare trail photos is unknown.

California Joe Milner guided the expedition into the Black Hills after having led them astray the first two days before he became accustomed to the terrain.

Courtesy J. E. Tompkins



To cover his first western assignment, MacMillan traveled by train from Chicago to Cheyenne. There he transferred to a stage coach, known as a "mud-wagon," for the two-day trip to Fort Laramie, costing $10. Along the way he found other drains upon his purse, and he complained of the "cuisine cartel" at stage stops and road ranches.

At Fort Laramie MacMillan fitted himself into the group. He joined the mess of Capt. Gerald Russell of the 3rd Cavalry. Officers formed small messes, paying for their own food and newsmen paid their share of the food bill. He found his needs of a tent, boots, bedding and other items obligingly cared for by the post trader, for he was an *Inter Ocean* man and his paper was identified with what was good for the West and Midwest. Having taken stock, he wired William Penn Nixon, manager of the paper: "Expect to be gone 4 months. Need 50 for horse." Nixon wired back the same day: "Draw on us for the amount necessary."

The young reporter caught the excitement of the hour in his dispatches. Noting that several bands of miners were camped on the Laramie and Platte, waiting to follow the trail of the military to the Black Hills, he wrote: "As the hour of leaving approaches, the pent-up excitement can no longer be controlled," and reported that miners constantly asked to be taken along in any capacity.

He recognized the scientific importance of the expedition, for much remained unknown of the Black Hills. "The center of the hills," he wrote, "are as yet a clear white on the best maps which it is intended to blur somewhat during the coming summer."

The magic lure of gold sharpened his zest. "From all quarters there have flowed in to me, while quartered here at the post, sufficient testimony to place it outside the realm of doubt." In short, he knew what he was going to find before he found it.

On the morning of May 25 the long line of 75 wagons, cavalry, infantry, scientists and 80 civilians employed as teamsters, herders and laborers moved out for the 10-day, 135-mile trip to the Black Hills. MacMillan wrote rhapsodically that "we will follow, with the magnet as guide, the track to the partially unknown land of nuggets and verdant hills."

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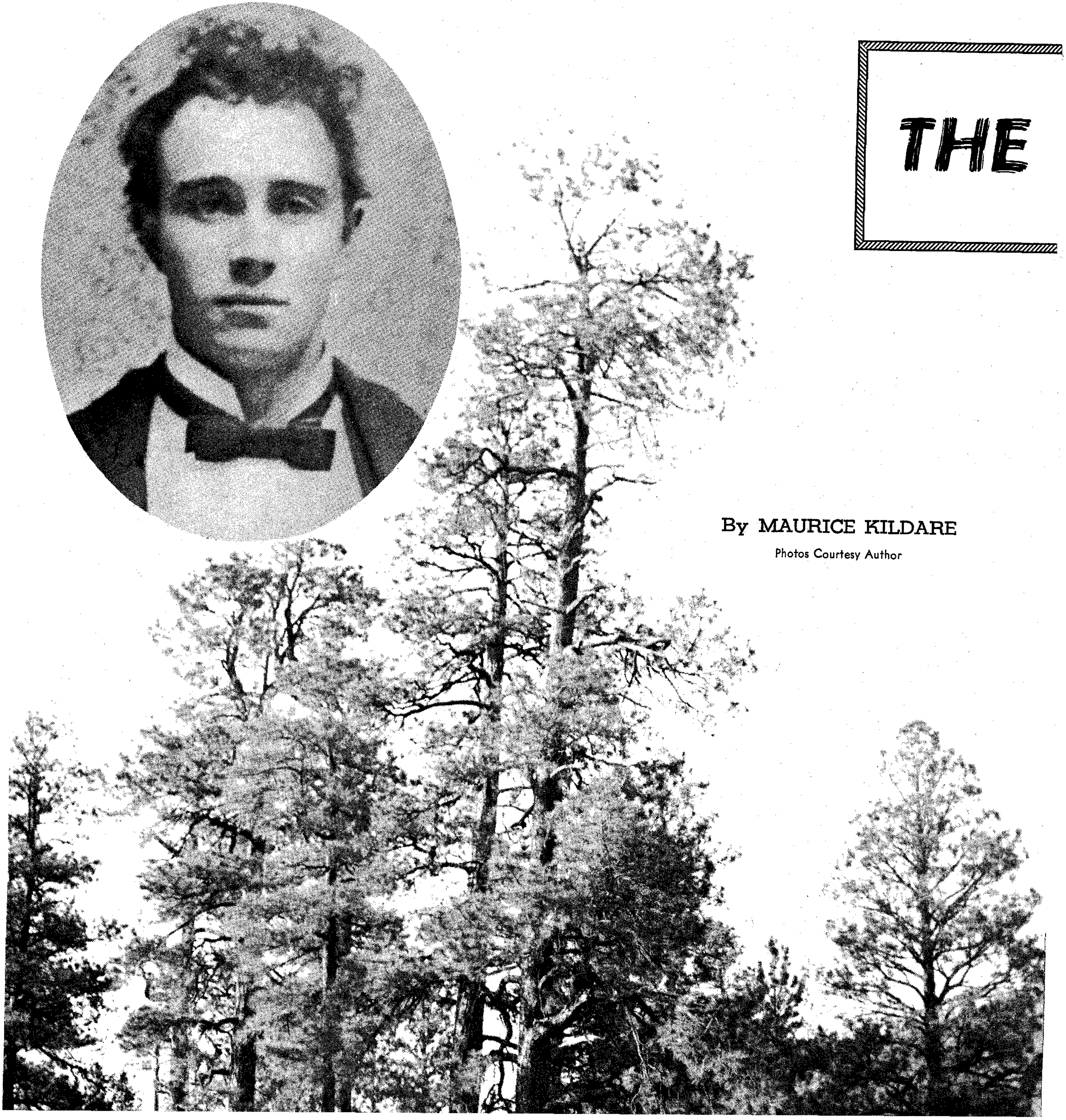


THE

By **MAURICE KILDARE**

Photos Courtesy Author

THOU$AND DOLLAR TREE

Woods can get leveled pretty quick if word gets out that a tree trunk is doubling for a bank!

COMING UP Mooney Trail in the afternoon, two prospectors heading for Grand Canyon country pulled off at the foot of a dome-topped mountain to make camp in pine timber.

After their stock was hobbled on grass far better than that in the Verde Valley from which they had just come, one picked up an ax. Going to a lightning-felled tree five feet in diameter, he surveyed it briefly. The long, jagged splinters on the butt end of the shattered log were gummy. Wood chopped from them would start a quick hot fire for supper cooking.

Selecting one he cut it free with a few strokes, and then a second. As it fell off the log to the ground a section of clinging bark came with it. Looking down, his eyes bugged out as a number of gold double eagles spilled out.

Finally awakening to the amazing situation he yelled loudly for his partner. Together they retrieved the coins, finding fifty that totaled an even thousand dollars.

Examination revealed that a hole had been bored into the big tree the exact diameter of a $20 gold piece. Plugged, the replaced section of bark concealed the opening which had grown in place again.

Excited over their good fortune, the prospectors axed off bark on the fallen tree as high as a man could possibly reach from the ground. Nightfall put an end to their labor so they cooked supper, discussing why and how the gold happened to be cached in a pine tree.

The next morning, not having reached any reasonable conclusion, they chopped the big tree in two, rolled over the butt section and scaled off the remaining bark. No more holes came to light.

On an August night in 1889 while in a Flagstaff saloon, they exhibited their hoard of coins, using one to pay for drinks. Asked where the gold pieces came from the answer was, of course, "Out of a pine tree bank!"

The barkeep and bystanders thought that quite a sally and laughed accordingly.

However, there was one listener who did not scoff. Indeed, far from it, Andy McGuire listened intently to everything the two prospectors had to say. But the subject changed and nothing more came from them. Eventually the crowd thinned and McGuire eased his boots near one of the prospectors against the barside.

"Did you fellers camp in the forest by Casner Mountain?" he inquired politely.

"At the foot of one," came the answer. "Got no idea what it's called."

Nodding his head casually, the thirty-year-old McGuire continued, "You followed Mooney Trail up over a knife rim south, to there?"

"Why, believe we did. What are you driving at, cowboy?"

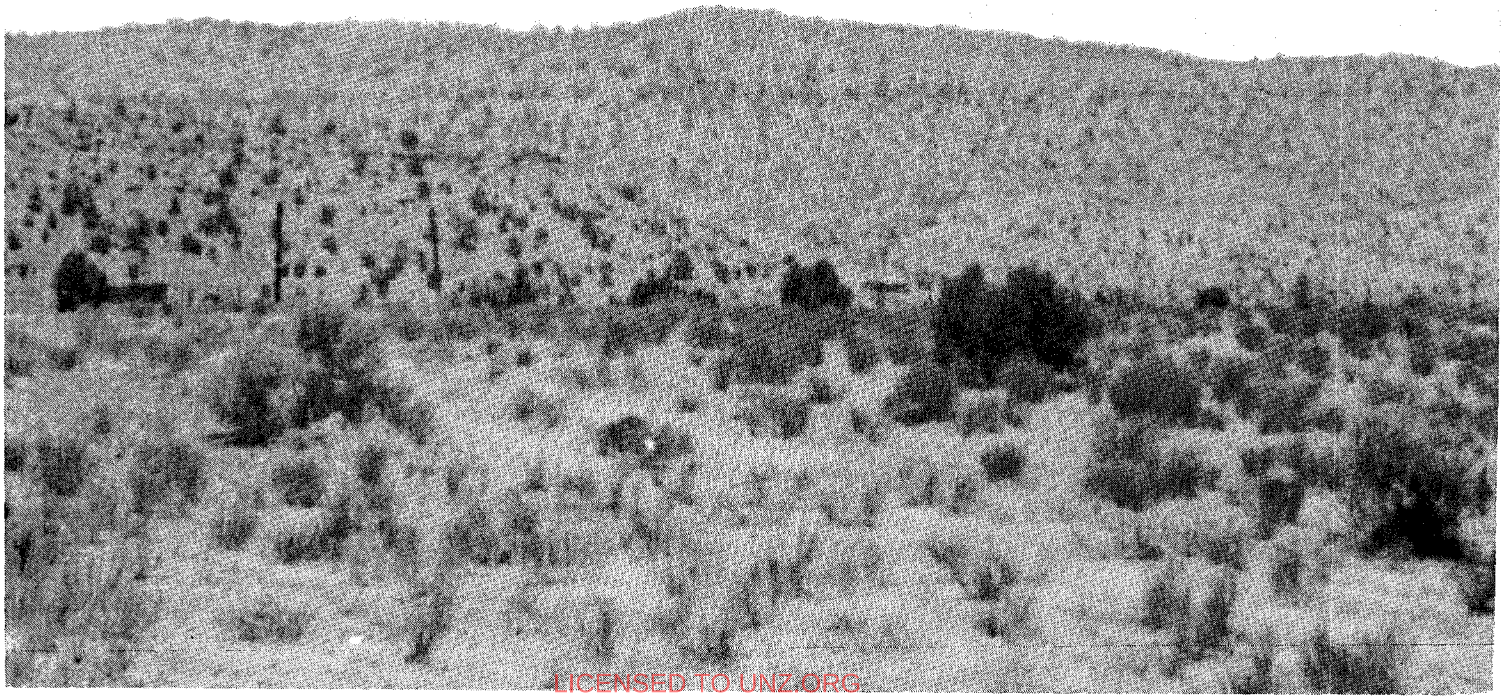
"Just curious. Punched cows in there one time."

"You interested in this gold?"

McGuire shook his head. "You found it, didn't you? All yours. Never heard of nobody crazy enough to cache money in a tree. Except for . . . " his voice trailed off to nothing.

The prospectors, aware of intense in-

Andy McGuire, upper left, in the 1880s as a cowboy working for George Casner, who hid his gold south of Flagstaff, Arizona in pine trees like those at left. Below, Casner Mountain at center on the horizon.



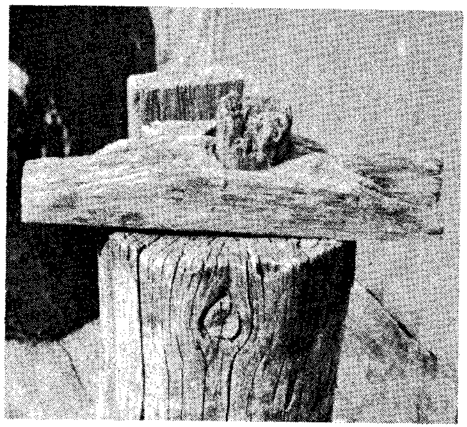
terest in their lucky find and suspecting McGuire of being a potential troublemaker, clammed up. Maybe someone would try to claim it from them. A few minutes later they left the saloon. The next day they were gone and out of the saga of the thousand-dollar tree.

McGUIRE had been a cowboy all his life, coming to southern Arizona from Texas in 1874. After several years in the San Pedro Valley he roved on north and went to work for George R. Casner twenty-five miles south of Flagstaff in the San Francisco Mountains. During the years 1881 to 1884 when he rode for Casner the Atlantic and Pacific Railroad built through west to California.

Casner had brought his sheep out of California into Arizona Territory because of the drought of 1876. Moving slowly east after crossing desert country he hankered for cool timber and plenty of grass. That was why, coming up Mooney Trail out of the Verde Valley, he squatted at the mountain that was to be named for him.

The first winter he discovered that the snows were unusually deep. Subsequently he took his sheep south over the rim into the valley ahead of cold weather. Remaining there until after lambing time, he returned to his ranch of log buildings at Casner Mountain.

As time went on he bought a few cattle. When his herd increased he concluded to turn cowman entirely. His sheep were sold to the Daggs brothers, W. F. and W. A., whom he had known in southern California and who were then the biggest sheep owners in the Southwest.


Courtesy Dave Hopkins

The pine tree bearing this plug was found in Beaver Creek Canyon and contained rolls of currency.

When McGuire went to work for him, Casner was a secretive, bearded, six-foot-tall and thin man in his sixties. A widower, he sometimes mentioned grown children on the West Coast but never wrote or received any letters from them.

In the Verde Valley and around Flagstaff, Casner was reputed to be a wealthy man. He had brought a large sum of money with him to the territory. Never dealing in currency he always paid—and expected to be paid—in gold. Nor did he use either of the small banks available at that time.

On one occasion in Flagstaff, McGuire ran across a former Casner sheepherder. The Basque told him that he had seen Casner burying a keg of gold on the ranch. He kept his mouth shut and stayed away from the cache. Later on he saw that the hole had been dug out and the sod replaced carelessly.

Already a story was being whispered that Casner had a fortune buried on the ranch. All McGuire actually knew was that when selling cattle in the Verde Valley, Casner always brought his money home in gold. In a day or two it disappeared from the two-room log house. He never kept more on hand than he needed for current expenses and to pay McGuire his wages when he wanted them.

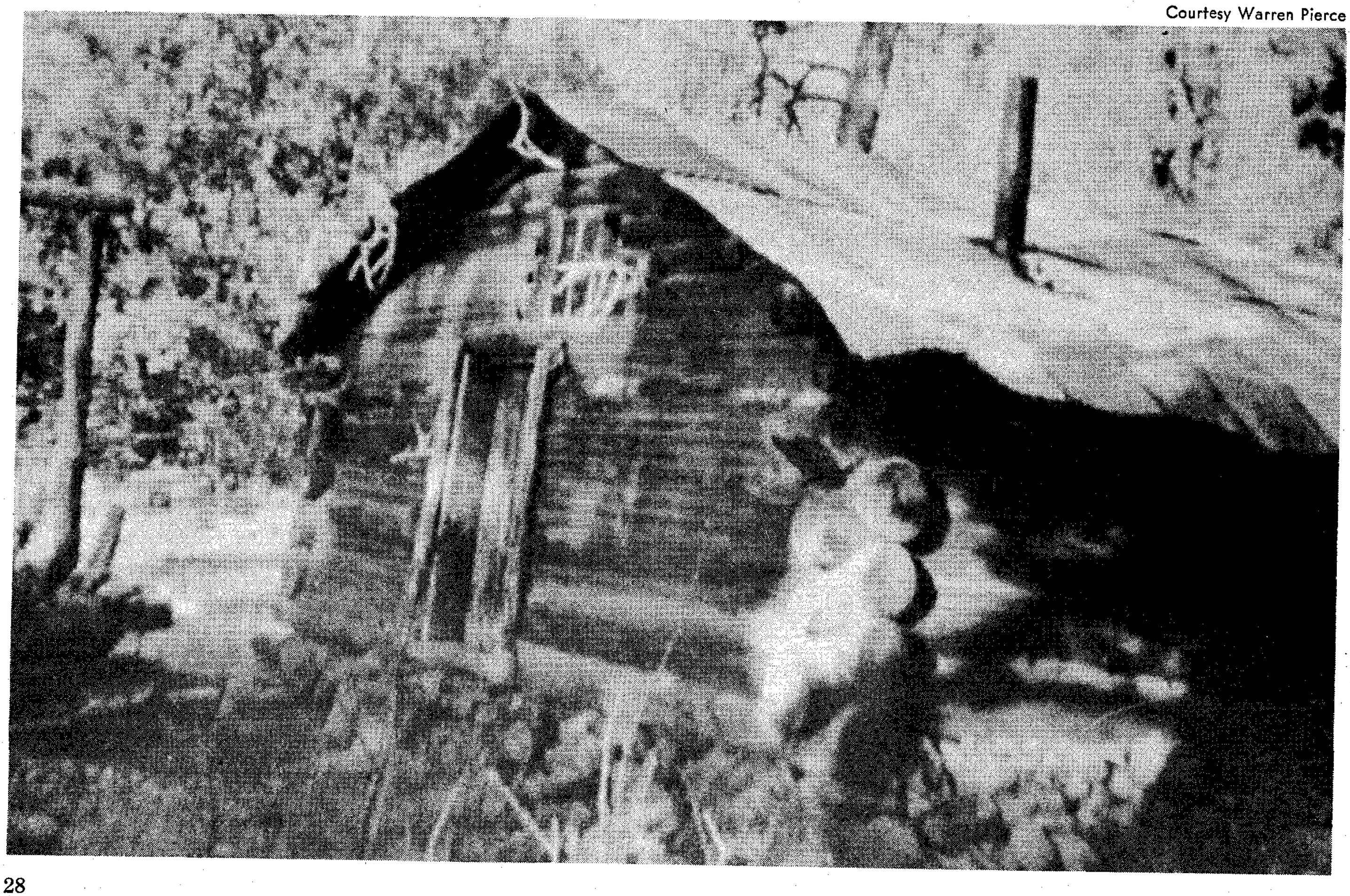
After hearing the prospectors' story McGuire remembered a curious thing. Every time Casner brought gold home and it disappeared, two augers hanging in the barn shed always seemed to be very bright as though having just been used.

In the fall of 1883 all the cattle were moved south off the mountain. Spring came and then early summer but Casner did not trail north again. Reaching camp late one night he told McGuire that he had sold the herd. The next day they were delivered to the buyer, who paid off in gold as had been requested.

Casner spent one more night in camp. In a somewhat mellow mood, he informed McGuire while paying him, and with a bonus, that he had a fortune at the ranch. He planned to go to southern

This cabin near Casner Mountain is like the one the cowman built and almost as old except for the tin roof.

Courtesy Warren Pierce



California to spend the rest of his days in comfort.

When asked if he needed any help, especially as a guard to Flagstaff where Casner would take a train west, the cowman shook his head.

"There ain't nothing could come up that I can't handle." The next morning Casner packed his horses and rode north.

McGUIRE went to work for the Charles T. Rogers Cattle Company. Headquartered in Williams on the railroad west of Flagstaff, the outfit ran cattle southwest to Rogers Lake, which the cattleman dammed. McGuire was stationed there in a line camp. Rogers' cattle ran south as far as Turkey Butte which stood north of Casner Mountain. One day that fall three men with a pack outfit rode south on the old Mooney Trail.

Three weeks later they were back, camping at the lake. They were a disgruntled lot, angrily claiming they had been hoaxed. They had been told that Casner had forgotten where most of his gold was cached and that it still remained on the site of his abandoned ranch. In their opinion this was a deliberate lie.

Casner's leaving a hoard of gold hidden there was a common story in Flagstaff. It was told then and repeated to this day. George R. Casner is not to be confused with Mose Casner of the Verde Valley. Mose also buried gold which has never been found, but in Beaver Creek Canyon.

Later when McGuire went to Flagstaff, he learned that Casner brought out only a little gold which he sent to California by express. He told W. F. (Bill) Daggs that it was only a small portion of what he had and he was going back to find the rest.

Subsequently he spent another two weeks at the mountain but returned to Flagstaff empty-handed, or so Daggs stated. It was this information which started the rumor of hidden gold.

The next time McGuire rode the range south, he went on to Casner Mountain. At the time he thought it curious that nowhere did he find any evidence of digging, not even by the three hunters who had been there recently.

THE FOLLOWING summer when Rogers' cattle were moved back onto mountain grass, McGuire discovered that Casner had returned and tried once more to find his gold. A year or two later Daggs reported that the old rancher died in California.

When McGuire heard the prospectors' story that day in the saloon he considered their find as the answer to the mystery. Casner had bored holes in big trees to hold his money and then had cleverly concealed the holes. So well, in fact that he couldn't find all of them again himself. McGuire, who was working for the A One Bar north of Flagstaff, quit and packed in to Casner Mountain.

The previous winter trappers camping in the cabin had been careless with fire. The second room had been badly burned. He repaired the open end along with the pole corral and barn. Then he set about examining the largest trees around the ranch site.

After long consideration McGuire arrived at several conclusions. The carefully carved round piece of bark attached to green wood would not grow in place after it was fitted except in the spring when the sap was rising. Casner would have had to replace those put in the holes in the late summer or fall. What had the cowman done with the useless round pieces of bark after replacing them? Probably they had been carelessly tossed aside. While searching for a tapped tree, he kept a sharp lookout for those pieces of bark.

He found eight before coming onto a bored tree. Each was an inch thick and gummy; they had been preserved in a pine needle bed. Their discovery confirmed his deductions. The number also indicated that Casner must have bored into a large number of trees.

Locating the lightning-felled tree from which the prospectors took the thousand dollars provided still another clue. It was not far from the cabin, yet was screened from being seen from there. The others would surely be in a belt around it, except for the west side. Casner Mountain perched on the side of Sycamore Canyon. In this swath of timber the old man had been able to cache

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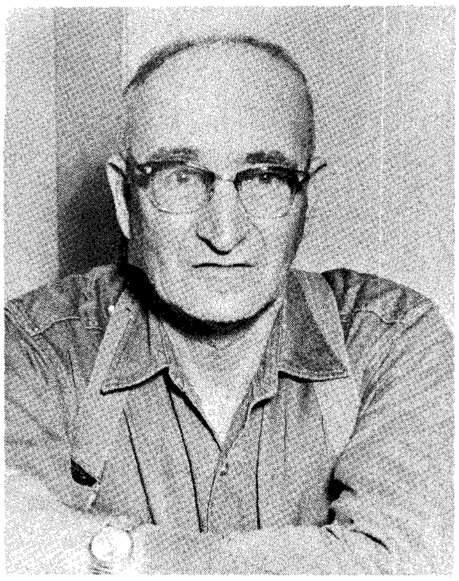
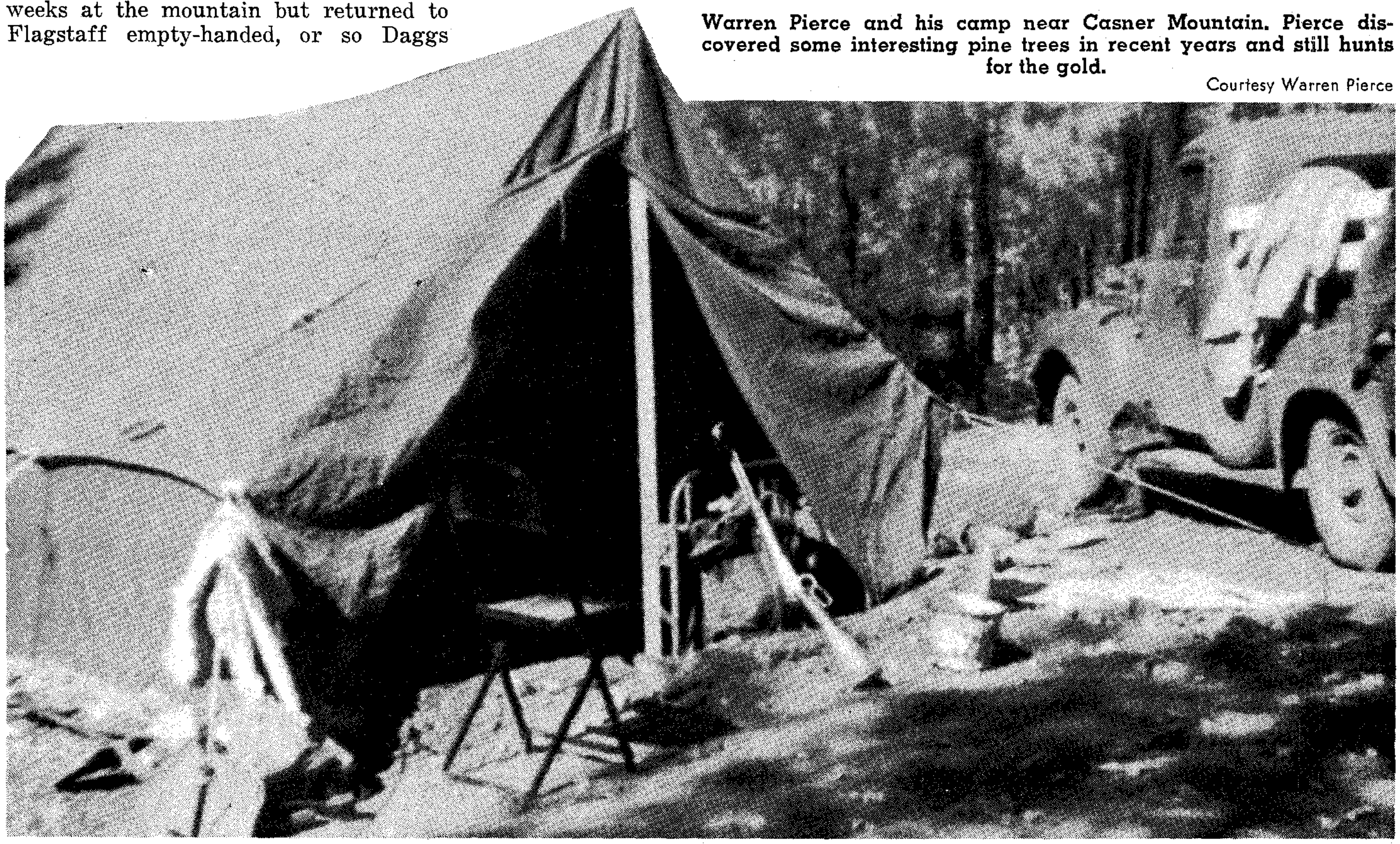




Warren Pierce and his camp near Casner Mountain. Pierce discovered some interesting pine trees in recent years and still hunts for the gold.

Courtesy Warren Pierce

Courtesy San Francisco Maritime Museum

Captain Charles Melville Scammon

DESTRUCTION OF THE DEVILFISH

A school of gray whales in an inlet hideaway can be as tidy a fortune as a private gold mine—but unfortunately claim jumpers operate on the briny much as they do in the canyons and draws!

By JOAN C. WATKINS

Photos Courtesy Author

SPRING AND SUMMER of 1857 were good for whales—and bad for whalers—on the brig *Boston*. In eight months searching the Pacific Ocean, Captain Charles Melville Scammon had found neither whales nor seals nor sea elephants. His oil barrels were empty.

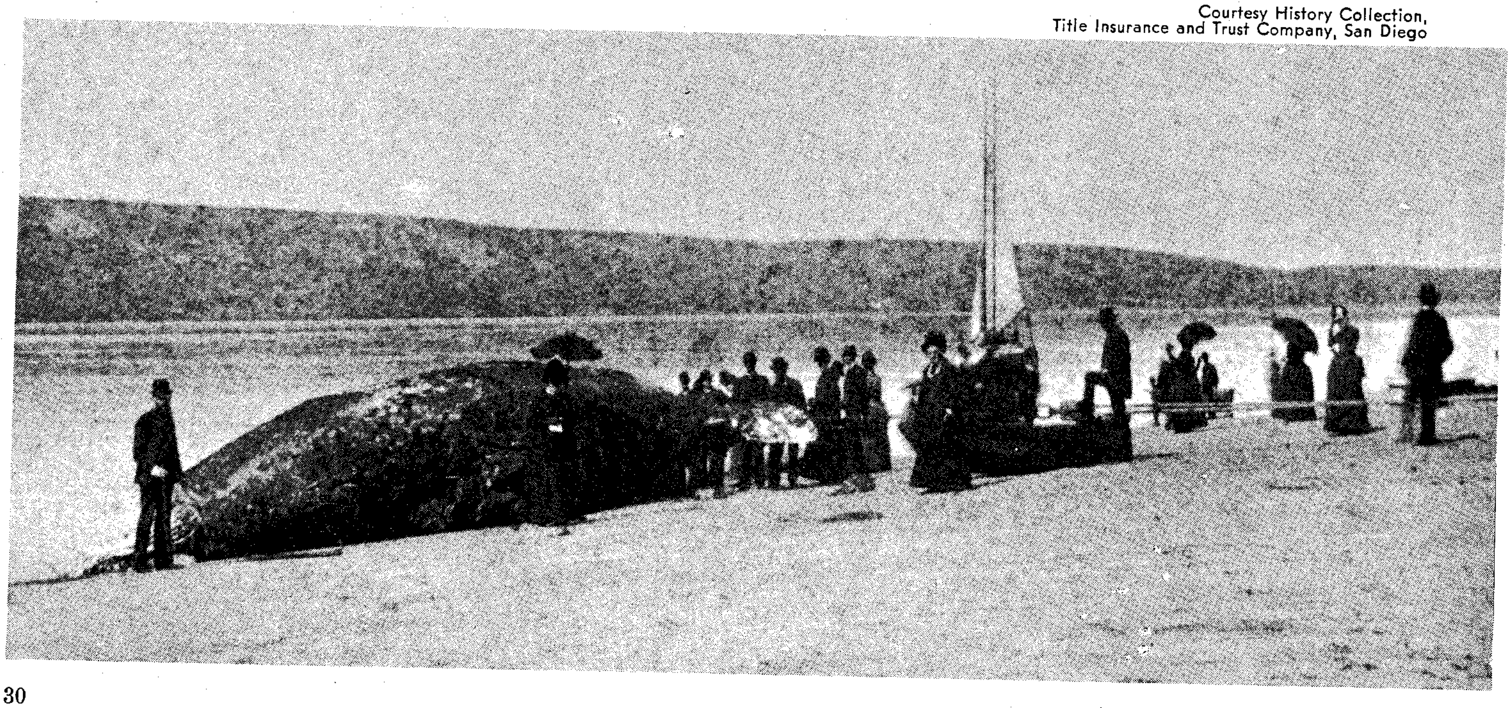
At Santa Barbara, California, Captain Scammon put a proposition before his men: either leave the ship penniless (for all had a share in the catch), or sign on for the winter cruise to Baja California. This handsome, black-bearded man of thirty-two must have been more humane than the average whaling captain of his day, for instead of flocking ashore *en masse*, the crew, except for three, stayed with the ship.

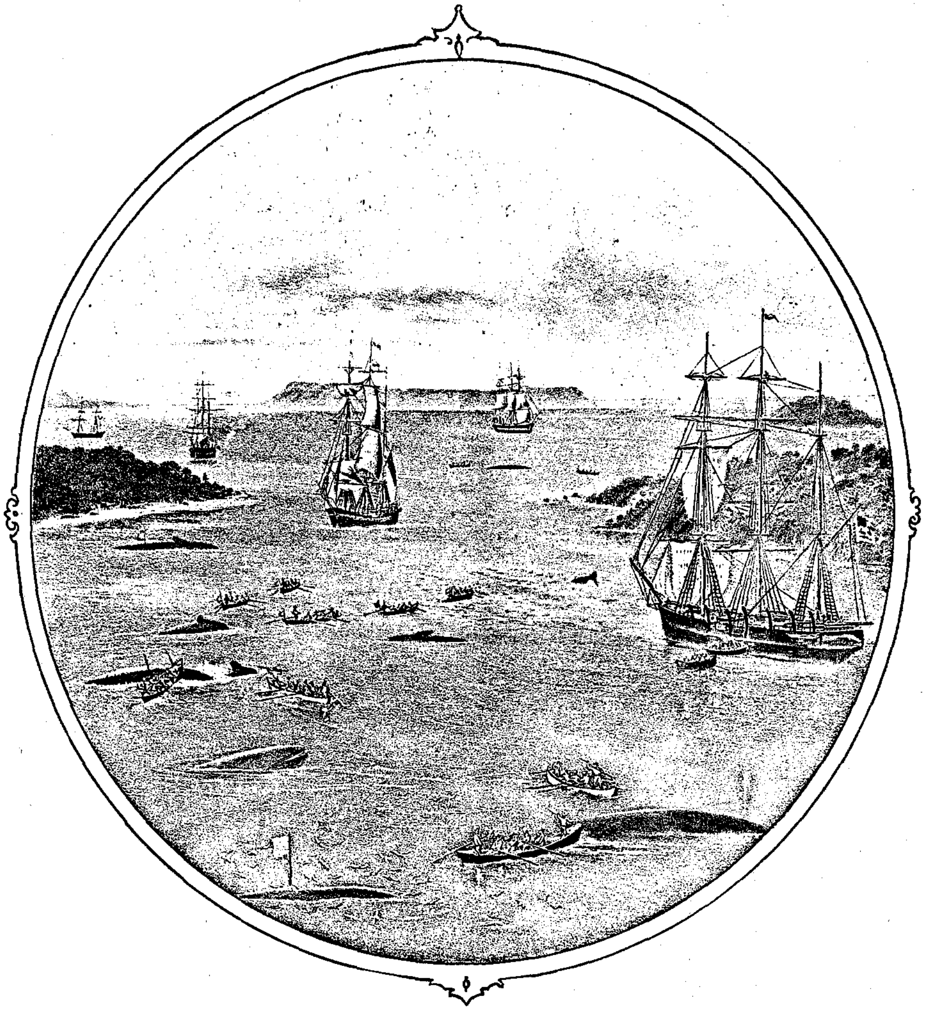
Despite the pitiful results of the early season Scammon was optimistic about the winter voyage. He had heard of a large lagoon, unknown to whalers, where countless numbers of California gray whales gathered during the winter. This doughty whaler—Maine born, Nantucket trained, adopted Californian—was eager to find such a perfect trap for capturing his elusive prey. The schooner *Marin* and the extra men needed to fill out the roster were sent down from San Francisco to the rendezvous point at Santa Catalina Island. On November 30 they set sail for the Bay of San Sebastian Viscaino nearly midway down the west coast of Baja California, some 300 miles south of the border. Neither captain nor crew realized it, but the adventure now beginning would affect far more than the personal fortunes of a few whalers. It was to jeopardize the very survival of one of the most vigorous and abundant species of American wildlife.

IN THE EARLY part of the 19th century thousands of California gray whales swam along the northwestern coast of North America. So numerous were they that rowing across San Diego

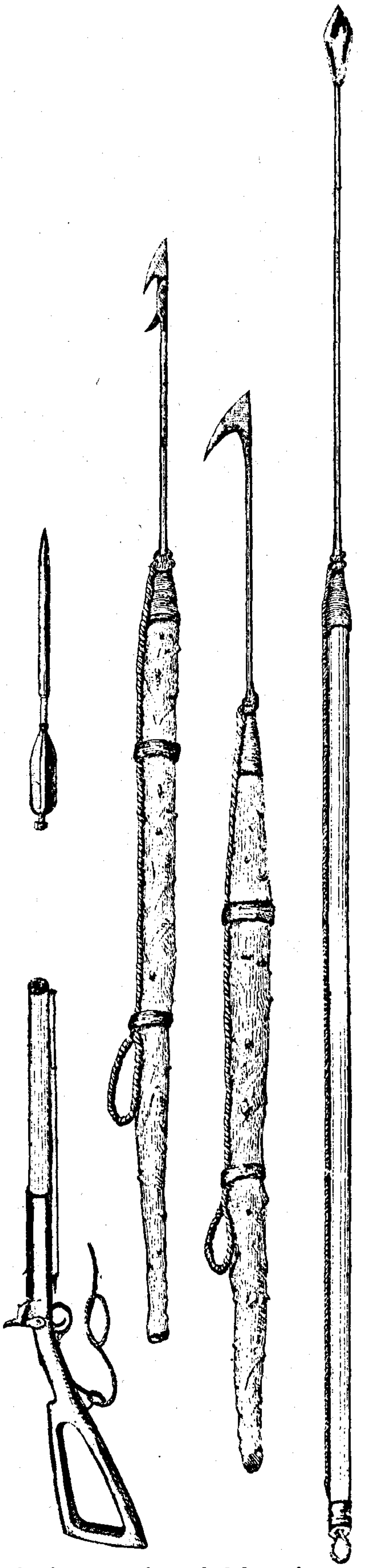
Whaling station at Ballast Point, San Diego, California about 1880.

Courtesy History Collection, Title Insurance and Trust Company, San Diego





Whaling in the California lagoons, most likely a Charles Scammon illustration.



Implements of a whaleboat from a Charles Scammon drawing. From left, bomb-lance gun (with bomb lance above), toggle harpoon, one-flued harpoon, and hand lance. Scammon sketched all possible items then likely to be found in a whaleboat, from a chock pin to a Greener's harpoon gun.

Bay in a small boat could be quite hazardous. Summer found them feeding in the Bering Straits off Alaska. After three or four months of building up their blubber reserves they headed south for Baja California where the warm bays and inlets provided hospitable surroundings for mating and for giving birth to their young. Come springtime the herd migrated back to the Arctic.

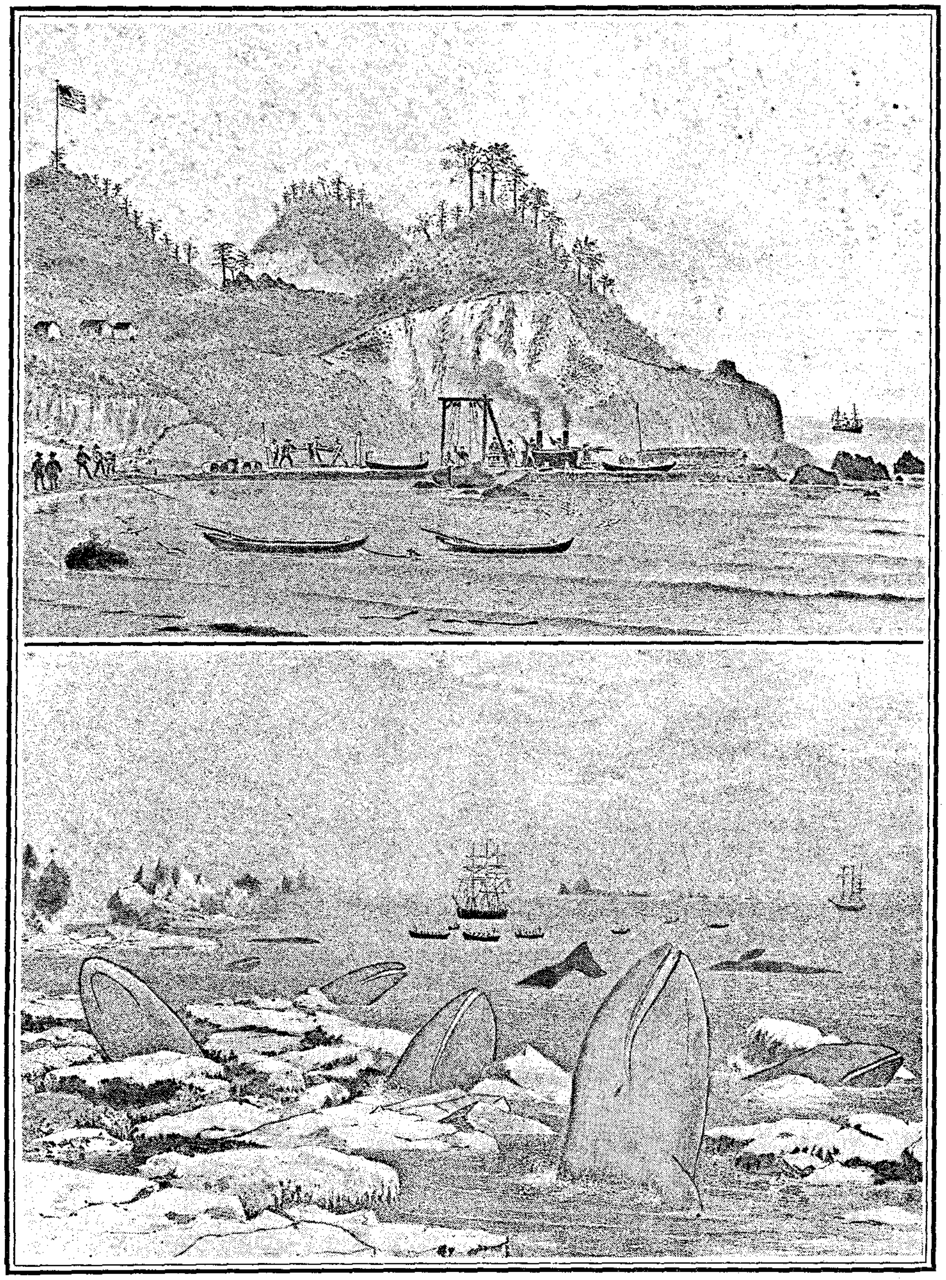
The good grade of oil rendered from their blubber eventually set the whalers on them. Hunting gray whales was usually a little less speculative than the average whaling venture, for they did not have to be sought out on the high seas. Despite the fact that they averaged only thirty-five to forty feet in length, they were vicious and cunning fighters. Often they attacked whaleboats, leaving the crew with broken bones and serious internal injuries. To the men of the Pacific whaling fleet they were the "devil-fish." But no matter how fearsome their reputation might be, by the 1850s the gray whales' breeding sanctuaries were being transformed into snares by the whalers.

UPON REACHING a particular landmark at the Bay of San Sebastian Viscaino, Scammon sent three whaling boats and the *Marin* to explore the coast. A channel was located and sounded out. Two days later the ships were on their way in.

It took nearly twenty-four hours to make the short passage. Capricious winds forced them to anchor for the night in the shallowest part of the channel. Heavy swells rolled in during the darkness, and everybody on board was too nervous to sleep. At noon the next day a good wind blew from the north. Anchors were hoisted, sails unfurled and at last the *Boston* and *Marin* sailed into the lagoon.

Before the eyes of Scammon and his crew lay a whaler's El Dorado. The balmy waters teemed with gray whales, porpoises and fish. Sunning themselves on the islands and sandbars which dotted the lagoon were thousands of seals and sea turtles. As the tide washed out, acres of geese, duck, snipe and other sea fowl swarmed over the shoals. Encircling this bountiful inland sea was a barren desert whose monotonous scenery was broken only by scattered clumps of prickly pear and stunted shrubs. The lagoon was shaped roughly in the form of a backward question mark and Scammon judged it to be thirty-five miles long and from four to twelve miles wide.

Although he later told the story of his discovery in *Marine Mammals of the Northwestern Coast of North America*, he never revealed how or from whom he learned of the lagoon's existence and location. Evidently he knew where he was going when he left Santa Catalina, for he wrote, "Having previously ascertained that a large lagoon branched out



Britton & Rey lithographs of two Scammon drawings. Top, a whaling station at Carmel Bay, California; below, California gray whales among the ice.

from the Bay of San Sebastian Viscaino (hitherto unknown to whalers), where the California Grays, in season, probably resorted. . . ." Yet the only facet of the voyage he considered worth detailing was the frustrating and dangerous trip through the channel.

This dearth of facts has encouraged a bit of speculation. Various writers have suggested that he deduced the lagoon's existence and doggedly searched until his lookout saw whales spouting in what seemed to be the desert, or he heard about it from a friendly Chinese sailor in Honolulu who had explored the Baja California coast in a junk, or he followed three whales who disappeared through a mysterious passage. No matter what his source, the Captain did not seem to be eager to share the credit for his discovery.

The tons of blubber Scammon hoped to secure could not be reduced to whale oil without an adequate fuel supply, so once the vessels had anchored he sent his men on a wooding expedition. The scattered pieces of a shipwreck they gathered may well have been the remains of the British whaler *Tower City,* which wrecked in the lagoon's channel in 1836. A journal kept by an officer related how, after a fruitless search for fresh water, all his shipmates had slowly died of thirst, and that he himself was beginning to experience the same symptoms. (Before he would sail seaward again, Scammon too would learn how unyielding the desert could be.)

While most of the men were busy collecting wood, a careless boatkeeper allowed four whaleboats to be swept through the channel out to sea. The ship's carpenter, an expert swimmer, was drowned in a vain effort to recover them. Finally the changing tide brought three of the craft close to shore. A dozen men ran into the surf, caught the boats and dragged them above the high water mark to safety. Scammon's expedition had lost one man and a valuable boat—and whaling had not yet begun.

NO SOONER had the last boatload of wood been put on board the *Boston* than a fierce gale broke out of the north. After three days of rough weather the storm abated and Scammon ordered the boats to be lowered. The chase had begun. The men quickly killed two large cows without incident, and everyone brimmed with confidence at the apparently effortless job ahead.

The next morning they were off again. The first boat closed in for the strike at a large whale when, without warning, the big beast dashed its powerful tail flukes against the boat, flinging its crew into the water and smashing the craft to pieces. A relief boat rushed to help the floundering men. As they were being pulled on board, a second whale staved the rescue boat. The third boat of the party worked desperately to save everybody.

Seldom had Scammon seen a more dismaying sight than the one he viewed that winter morning from the deck of the *Boston.* Crowded into the rescue boat, almost to the point of swamping, were the victims of the devilfish. Close behind was another rescue boat filled with kindling wood—the remains of the splintered whaleboats. Men who had been severely hurt were placed on mattresses on the quarter-deck. Others limped back to their bunks in the forecastle. Nearly half the crew were unfit for duty, and many of the sound ones were completely demoralized.

After a few days, the hospital-like appearance of the brig faded and bustling preparations for a whale hunt began again. The captain rallied his men, and from among the physically able, picked two boat crews.

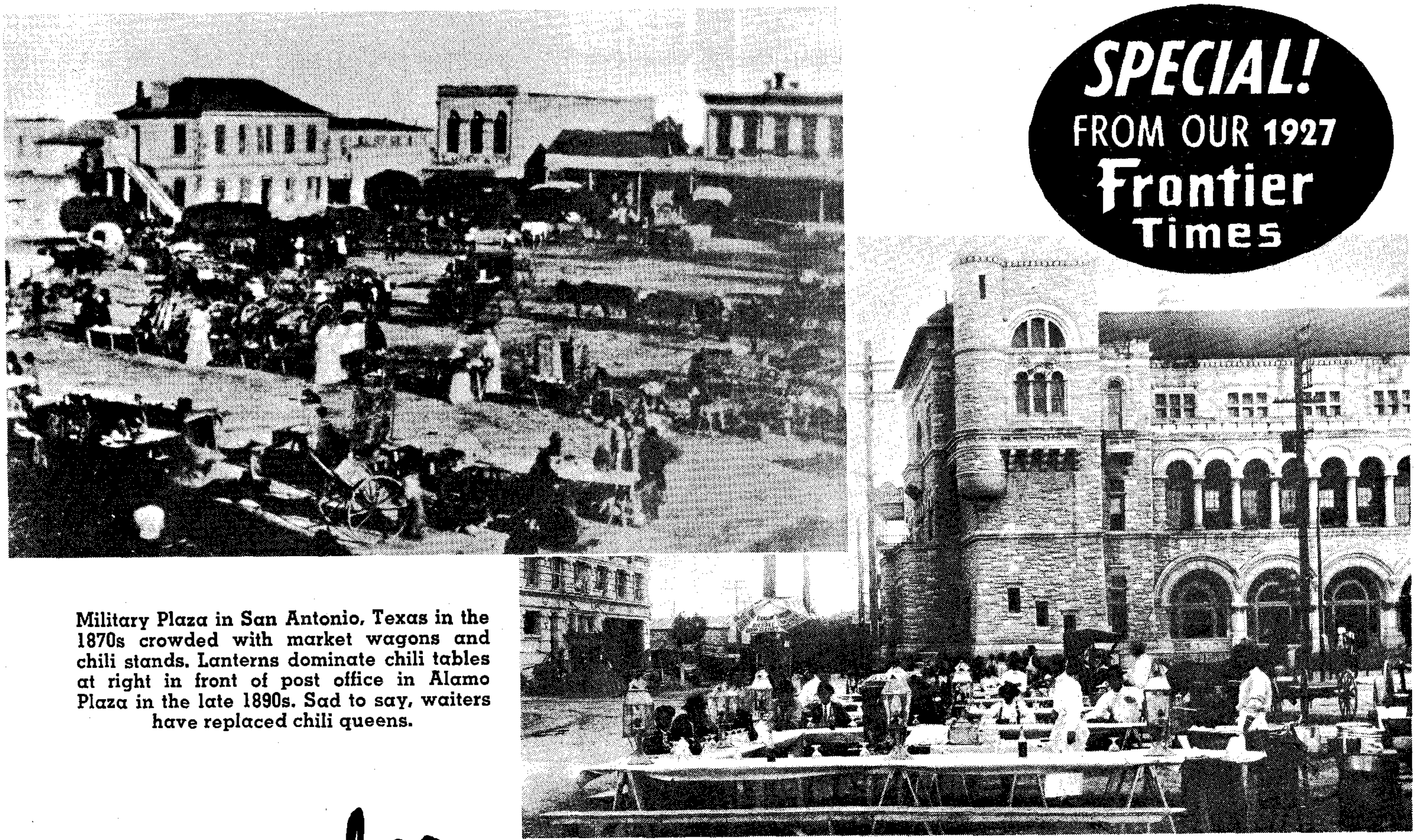
Memories of recent misfortunes seemed to have faded, for the men pulled away from the ship with renewed enthusiasm. A devilfish was soon sighted and selected for the kill. Three fathoms, or eighteen feet, was darting distance for the hand-thrown harpoon. The boat had come almost within striking range when suddenly the men dropped their oars and everybody but the officer and the would-be harpooner jumped overboard!

Scammon was dumbfounded. With whale oil bringing 73c a gallon in San Francisco, a veritable fortune was floating around him. But his terror-stricken crew was pushing his hoped-for riches beyond reach. Unless he could quickly devise a safer method of killing whales, this would be the ironic end to his second disastrous voyage within a year.

Thus far the men had been using whaling techniques developed for the open sea. A harpoon was darted into the whale and the rope leading from it was made fast to the boat. Despite one or more painful harpoon wounds, the whale was far from dead. The oldest way of dispatching one was for the officer to repeatedly thrust a long hand-lance into its vital organs while the whaleboat was virtually on top of the thrashing beast. Another close-range method involved the use of Pierce's harpoon-bomb-lance-gun,

(Continued on page 68)

SPECIAL!
FROM OUR 1927
Frontier Times



Military Plaza in San Antonio, Texas in the 1870s crowded with market wagons and chili stands. Lanterns dominate chili tables at right in front of post office in Alamo Plaza in the late 1890s. Sad to say, waiters have replaced chili queens.

Remember the CHILI QUEENS?

By FRANK H. BUSHICK

Photos Courtesy Division of Manuscripts, University of Oklahoma Library

AWAY BACK YONDER forty years ago Military Plaza was the center of night life in old San Antonio, Texas. It was an open air bazaar for huskers, night-hawks, fakirs and peddlers at whose hands might be purchased everything from a pair of window glass spectacles to a patent preparation for removing butter from boarding-house butter. The blaring notes of a neighboring variety show band gave forth a certain suggestion of risque gaieties.

It was the Great White Way of San Antonio of that day—or rather of those nights. That was before Mayor Bryan Callaghan built the city hall in the middle of the plaza in 1887 and banished the Bedouins of the Night to other quarters and made it a staid locality of business and politics.

It was on Military Plaza that the original Wizard Oil singers held forth and made a great hit as popular entertainers, being considered the best opry outfit that had struck the town up to that date, not excepting the dancing bear, Punch and Judy and a one-ring Mexican circus.

Another great attraction which held forth for months on the plaza was the medicine show of Dr. J. I. Lighthall, known as "The Diamond King." Lighthall was a handsome and flashily dressed man who addressed the assembled populace nightly from his gilded chariot resembling a circus wagon in which he removed teeth with lightning dexterity, free of charge, while his agents passed among the crowd and sold his unfailing remedies for man and beast.

But the conspicuous feature which made Military Plaza a showplace in those days were the chili stands. At these primitive open-air restaurants *chili con carne* and other pungent Mexican dishes were served to customers seated on little benches around wobbly tables covered with greasy oilcloth. The gay illumination was furnished by dim lanterns and the fitful gleams of smouldering mesquite wood fires.

There is a tradition that the Plaza de Las Armas, or Military Plaza, got its name about two centuries ago from the fact that a Spanish army camped there to hold the town against some French filibusters who had designs on it. The soldiers probably wanted to be near the *cantinas* and barrel houses that used to be so thick in that vicinity.

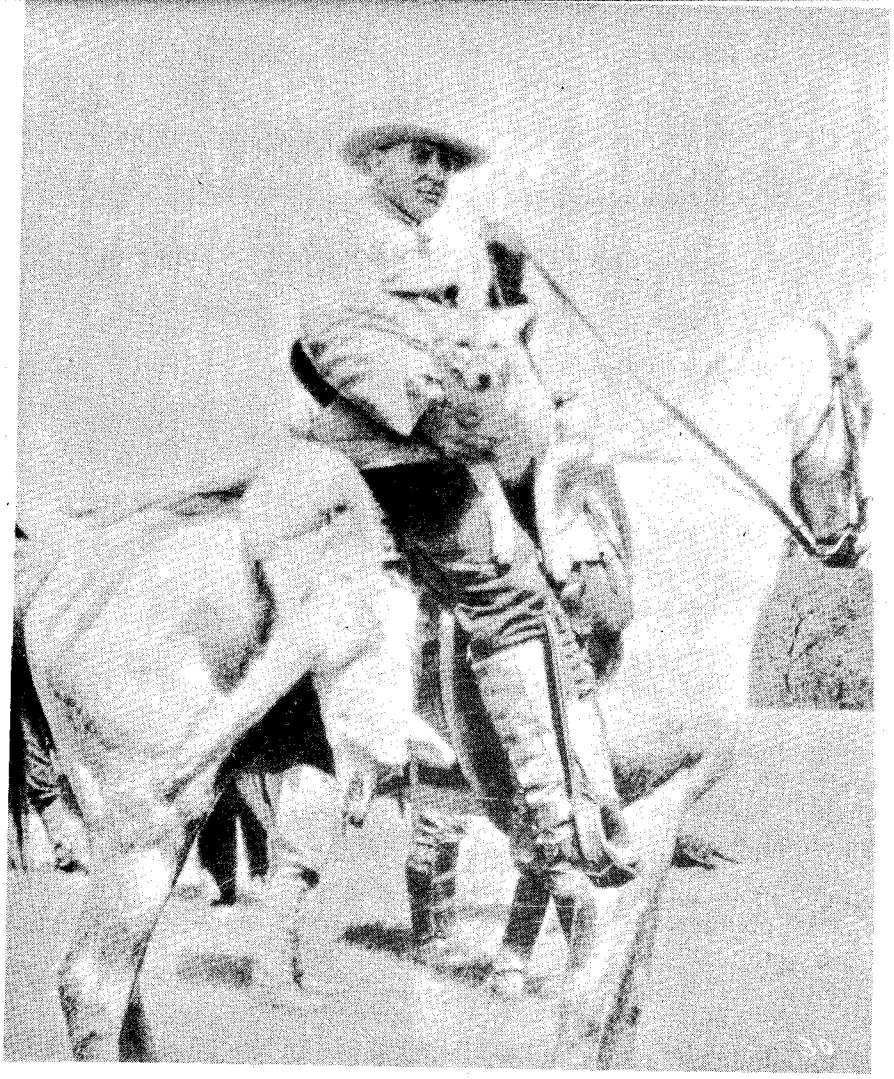
The chili stand and chili queens are peculiarities, or unique institutions of the Alamo City. They started away back there when the aforesaid Spanish army camped on the plaza. They were started to feed the soldiers. They were the first outdoor coffee stands, the symptom perhaps of the later breaking out of the cafeteria where you serve yourself and spill your coffee down your shirt front in order to economize and save a nickel tip to a waiter.

THE FAME of the Alamo City chili stands spread all over the country. In many northern cities can be found little Mexican restaurants serving nondescript concoctions in imitation of the Mexican dishes which have made the chili stands and Mexican restaurants of San Antonio famous. At the World's Fair in Chicago in 1893 the eye was greeted with a sign in front of a booth on the grounds, "The San Antonio Chili Stand."

Travelers and tourists who come to San Antonio usually get around to the Mexican restaurants and chili stands before they take the time to visit our world-famous patriotic shrine which so many of our visitors insist on calling "A-lay-mo."

Every class of people in every station of life patronized them in the old days. Some were attracted by the novelty of it, some by the cheapness. A big plate of chili and beans with a *tortilla* on the side

(Continued on page 72)



Jack Abernathy, above, back from the hunt with live wolves caught barehanded. Below, President Teddy Roosevelt (standing second from right) and Jack Abernathy (third man left of Roosevelt) during a wolf hunt in the Big Pasture. Abernathy holds wolf captured alive and unhurt. During the wild, ten-mile race chasing wolves, President Roosevelt was the only rider able to keep up with Abernathy. Photos were taken by Dr. Alexander Lambert, the President's physician.

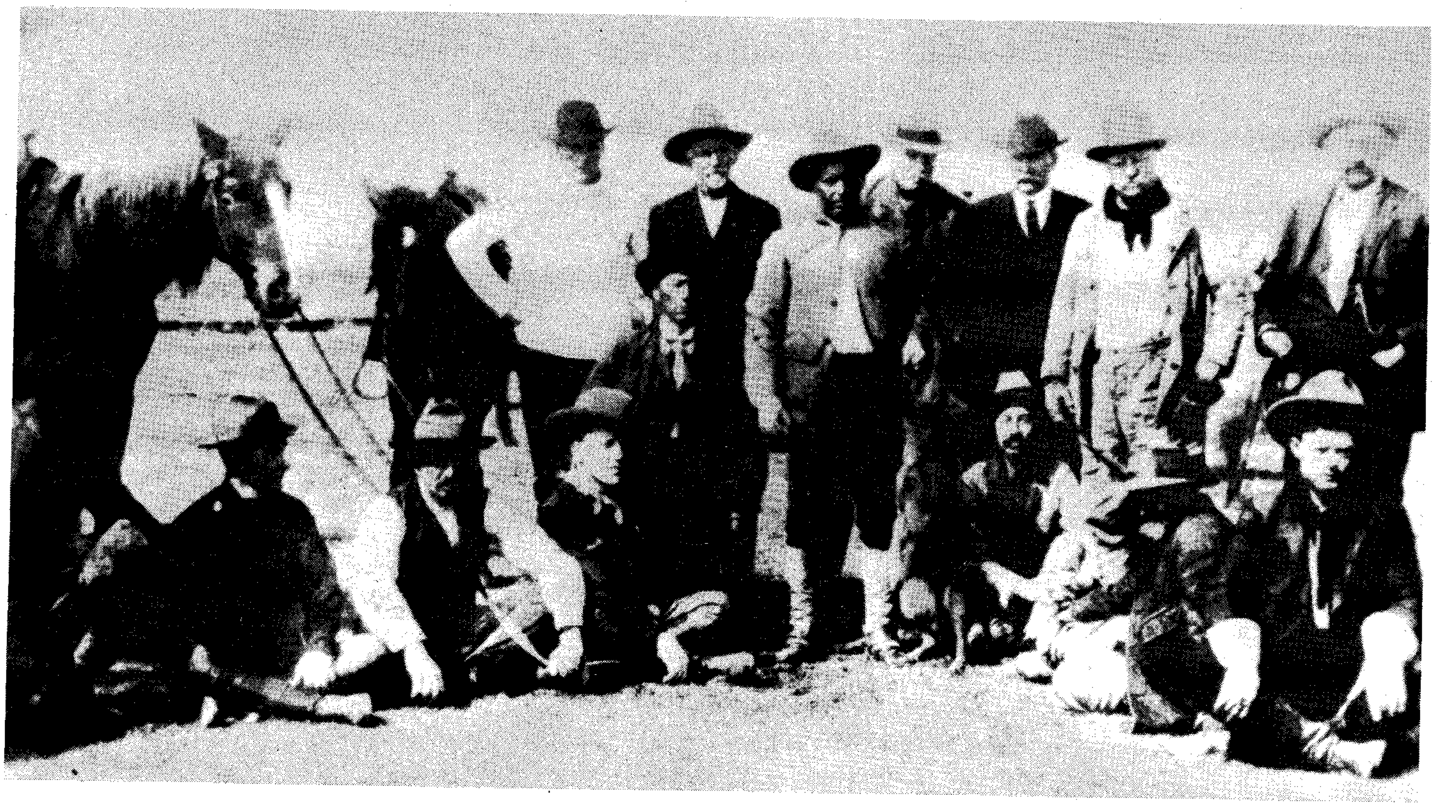
JACK

By MARILYN WAIDA

Photos Courtesy Author

PRESIDENT WILLIAM McKinley's Great Land Lottery of 1901 brought thousands of fortune hunters to Oklahoma Territory under faint legal protests from Chief Lone Wolf of the Kiowas. The famous rich farm land in the creek valleys surrounding the Wichita Mountains and the Kiowa-Comanche-Apache and Wichita-Caddo Indian Reservations totaled some two million acres—and were to be given away by a turn in the wheel of fortune!

Sixty thousand landseekers and fortune hunters swarmed into El Reno before the opening day for registration during July 1901. Thousands crowded into Fort Sill, and another site at Lawton attracted 20,000. Townsite lots were being auctioned.



ABERNATHY

—OKLAHOMA LEGEND

He preferred bare hands to guns —be they wolves or men he was bringing in!

John Abernathy was sworn in as new undersheriff in Lawton, serving under Sheriff W. W. Painter. Abernathy had his first real experiences as a peace officer during the exciting days at Lawton when gunfights were common and trivial matters triggered the tempers of impatient men enduring the soaring heat of late summer.

Except for lanterns in tents, the camp outside the townsite was in darkness at night. Prisoners were chained to a wagon and guarded. There was no jail as this was the beginning of towns, farms and cities in one of the last frontiers of the United States.

Earlier runs on territories in Oklahoma had resulted in hardships and tragedies. Some racers were killed and others were shot in bitter disputes over claims and legal contests for land. And so it was, the Kiowa-Comanche-Apache area was opened under the Congressional Land Act sponsored by Dennis T. Flynn, permitting citizens over twenty-one to register and drop their names in a great box mounted on a shaft. The lucky names drawn had a right to file claims on the land. The drawing was held in the presence of the crowd and names were read and recorded by a clerk.

Requirements under the law stipulated that a homesteader should live on the land for five years from the date of filing to entitle him to a free deed from the government. Homesteaders were to dig a well, build a habitable house and till the soil. They had six months to settle after filing a claim.

In July 1901 El Reno was so crowded that people slept on porches, in vacant lots and on lawns. Water was sold for five cents a tin cup during the heat of the day. During a period of three months, more than 400,000 hopefuls swarmed the roads.

At the end of registration, a number exceeding 167,000 persons had signed up for the great land lottery. Politics went on as usual in Lawton. Leslie P. Ross was elected mayor; Heck Thomas, chief of police; Hawkins, assistant chief. Hawkins was a big man, six feet, six inches in height. Thomas was an old-time frontier officer. Abernathy learned many things in those early days in Lawton and he found that being a sheriff was a real man's job. In addition to outlaws and murderers, there were the distressed people, the sick, the indigent—a typhoid epidemic once raged there and in Hobart and Anadarko.

Thousands of dollars changed hands each day in Lawton as individuals gave up their rights on land claims. Sellers ended up in saloons and gambling houses.

John Abernathy's name was drawn and he filed on one of the overlooked 160-acre tracts in the northeast quarter of Comanche County, now Tillman County. Abernathy loaded up his covered wagon with an old piano box, camping equipment, bedding, cooking utensils and his pretty wife and four children. A fifth child was due anytime. As they raced across the territory toward the specified tract, Pearlie Abernathy sat calmly by her husband, holding their youngest children in her arms. The race for this section began from the west bank of the North Fork of Red River. They forded the river and raced two miles to the claim.

ABERNATHY unloaded his wagon, set up his piano box house and started digging his well. The box was big enough for Mrs. Abernathy and the four children. Six weeks later the fifth baby was born in the piano box-dugout homestead.

Doc Barr tried to settle 100 yards away from the Abernathys, and four other contestants for the land fired at them but luckily did no damage. Later the young sheriff met the four men on the road from Frederick, some two miles from his claim. Abernathy had anticipated trouble and his friend Blue Johnson, an old frontiersman, had been concealed inside the covered wagon armed with two doublebarrel shotguns loaded with buckshot.

"Well, Abernathy, someone has got to move," one of the men had shouted to the sheriff-homesteader. Abernathy recognized two of the men as notorious killers.

Abernathy had answered coolly, "You are not tied, are you?"

"Well," the outlaws said, "you can get into anything before you know it."

"And I can get out of anything before you know it," said the young homesteader, as he stepped out of the wagon to the ground. About this time Blue Johnson jumped from the wagon with a bloodcurdling yell and shouted, "Let's kill 'em all now!" And he took the drop on the four men with one of the loaded shotguns.

"My God!" one of the quartet protested as he noted Blue's gunbarrel. "You don't mean to murder us, do you?" And Blue cut down on them with old-time cowboy lingo, but Abernathy made him hold his fire.

"Now boys, I moved on that claim to stay. When I move off, I'll be hauled off. So if any moving is going to take place, I would advise you to move—and move hurriedly," Abernathy said

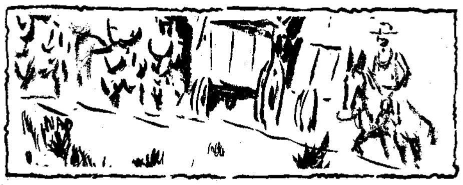
The men left. Finally in the trial, the Abernathys won title to the land since the fifth baby was born there and because they had established a simulated dwelling from the piano box and the dugout.

After he had won his claim, Abernathy built a house, hauling lumber from Vernon across the North Fork of the Red River, the Red River and the Pease.

And while Abernathy milked a wild cow for his children and fought off the wolves from his chickens, he also was active as a law enforcement officer and sheriff, joining in the search for the Bert Casey gang, terrors of the Twin Territories from 1901-1904.

Abernathy was associated with Sheriff Frank Smith and Deputy George Beck of Anadarko. He was saddened when both were murdered the day after Christmas, 1901, near Fort Cobb, Caddo County, as the lawmen attempted to bring in some men from an abandoned ranch house.

Casey and his gang had robbed the post office at Marlow, had held up a stagecoach from Rush Springs, and had killed a passenger, the young son of Dr. Z. E. Beenblossom of Oklahoma City.



Abernathy was then appointed deputy under U.S. Marshal Bill Fossett. His work was in Comanche and southwestern counties. One day he received a telegram from headquarters at Guthrie to meet Deputy Marshal Fry in Lawton and help arrest a man named Keller who was hiding in a dugout in the Wichita Mountains. Abernathy had to locate the supervisor of the Forest Reserve to find the location of the dugout.

Driving a livery rig pulled by two wild horses, the deputies set out to meet the forest supervisor. They were told that they would never take Keller alive. To travel to the hideout, the lawmen had to journey first to Cache, then to Indiahoma, then back north fifteen miles to the mountains.

When the two deputies arrived in Cache, a train was pulling into the station bound for Lawton. Deputy Fry took the warrant out of his pocket and said to Abernathy, "You get him if you can. I've got to go to Lawton."

ABERNATHY continued to the farm of Jim Simmons, district farmer for the Comanche Indians, where he spent the night. The next morning he invited Simmons to go along, but the farmer declined.

Just as Abernathy was leaving the homestead area, he saw a man dodge behind a house. The deputy called him over for a short talk only to realize that he was the same man whom Abernathy earlier had protected from a conductor on the train from Comanche. The conductor had been kicking the fellow's ribs out.

The man rode along with Abernathy until they got to the area about a mile from a mountain peak where Keller was supposed to have his dugout. Keller was a brawny mountaineer from Kentucky, about six feet tall. He had been convicted of killing three persons in Kentucky and had escaped jail.

Abernathy found a suitable tree to tie up his wild team. He secured the tongue of the buggy to a tree and as the morning sun filtered through the forests, he took his rifle, strapped on his pistol and began a search of the surrounding woods.

A waist-deep mountain stream had to be forded so he held his guns high and waded across. He kept walking briskly, keeping an eye on the distant peak as his guide to the location of the dugout. But he found no signs of habitation on the mountain and certainly no dugout.

Disappointed, he returned to the buggy and rested, turning his thoughts to the job at hand. Later when he considered his first attempt to find Keller, he knew that he had been under divine guidance. In fact it seemed more like a miracle than a failure, since he eventually caught Keller away from his mountain hideout and without the advantage of all his firearms.

Determined, Abernathy set out again, wading the stream but moving farther northwest and searching the underbrush along the way. He found a path and moved along swiftly and quietly when he heard the sound of someone chopping wood. It had to be Keller. He waited, listened, and moved forward, taking advantage of the thicket-cover.

Keller would hit about five licks with the ax, then silence. This meant that he looked around each time. Near the edge of the clearing, the deputy marshal crouched in the brush. He examined his six-shooter and then prayed, "God, have mercy upon us."

There was nothing more to be done. Abernathy advanced ten steps into the open and leveled his rifle at the woodchopper.

"Hands up, Keller!"

Keller did not move, nor did he obey. He just stood there looking at the lawman, reminding him of a mean bull. Abernathy pulled the trigger, but it only snapped. This was the first time in Abernathy's life that a cartridge ever failed to explode. Instantly he threw another cartridge into the barrel.

Keller's pistol was on the ground near the stump of the tree he had just chopped down. Abernathy did not believe he could get to the gun. He was closer to the gun than Keller.

"I have thirteen guns trained on you, fellow! If you make a wrong move, you will drop dead in your tracks!" Abernathy shouted and his grim determination was enough to shake any man's confidence.

"Turn your face to the west and step lively," Abernathy ordered. "If you cause any trouble, I'll turn the posse loose!"

Abernathy could have killed the man at that moment, but he kept on with his bluff and made it stick. Keller was forced to hit the path and keep looking ahead, but the mountaineer was listening for the other men. As he walked down the path, Keller was told he could put his hands down. The marshal knew that if he tried to apply handcuffs, Keller would try to get the best of him. He could tell that his prisoner had not given up hope of escape.

WHEN THEY CAME to the mountain stream, Keller balked.

"Hit the water and hit it hard," Abernathy ordered.

The outlaw waded into the creek and Abernathy followed. That was the fourth time that day that he had waded the stream and there wasn't a dry thread below his waist. The water was cold, but the day was warm. Keller repeatedly tried to look around to see where the possemen were, but Abernathy made him keep his eyes straight ahead.

When they reached the rig Keller was told to untie the team then get into the buggy. Abernathy drove with his left hand and held his pistol on Keller with his right. They drove to the homestead area and when no other horses followed Keller cursed, "If you hadn't told me that damn lie, I wouldn't be here."

"Yes, you would. You would be here—but in a different shape!" Abernathy assured him.

They finally arrived at Cache where Simmons and 100 armed Indians were waiting, about to search the underbrush and the mountains. Abernathy gave Simmons a wink and he caught the marshal's meaning. Abernathy then whispered to him to put handcuffs on Keller and he obeyed instantly.

At last the young officer could breathe a sigh of relief. And the Indians who were armed accompanied him on to Guthrie. Marshal Bill Fossett was waiting there to jail the prisoner.

Abernathy believed that his failure to locate Keller at first was the miracle that may have saved his life, since he went after the criminal single-handed. The man was too desperate to have ever surrendered had he not been trapped in the open.

Keller was returned to Kentucky, where three weeks after his return he was executed.

In all of Abernathy's gun battles he never killed an outlaw or a prisoner. He took them alive. Throughout his life he was known as "Catch-um Alive Jack" since he also caught wolves with his bare hands and took them in alive, too! Jack had worked on Charles Goodnight's famous JA Ranch and once demonstrated his skill at capturing wolves alive for none other than Teddy Roosevelt while the President was a visitor at Guthrie.

This man Jack Abernathy, my grandfather, could be talking to one or two persons in a hotel lobby and before long would be addressing a crowd as he spun tales of the Old West, of cattle drives, of land runs into Oklahoma and of outlaws and other interesting people he had known.

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The Men Who Don't Fit In

(Continued from page 15)

was mad at me. I think he classed me as white trash.

Sleepy liked raise mining. He never did care for shafts or drifts or stopes. He used to laugh and say the reason he liked raise mining so well was because he was heading toward heaven, and when he was driving a shaft he was heading towards hell, and who wants to go to hell!

Sleepy and I worked a while in Telluride, then went to Thompson and took a lease at a vanadium mine. In those days, uranium wasn't of any value at all—we'd mine it and throw it away. We were after vanadium. On the Thompson, we got some pretty good leases. A fellow by the name of Pete Stocks had the whole Thompson area sewed up but he sub-leased to many miners. T-Bone, Butt Block, Stan-the-Man, and Jackman had leases out there, too. Sleepy and I took a lease on three claims.

It was shallow ore but it was high-grade. We had a cook tent and a small pup tent to sleep in. We had a model A Ford compressor and two cylinders to pull the motor and two cylinders for the compressor. It was a pretty slow operation but we made money and had a whale of a lot of fun.

While we were on the Thompson, a mine equipment salesman came out from Grand Junction with a brand new Sullivan jack-leg and a brand new Sullivan drill and wanted to demonstrate them. He drilled out fifteen holes in about thirty-five or forty minutes.

Right away I had to have that machine! He told me he'd order one but I insisted that I had to have that one. I had the money on me so I bought it.

Next morning he went on his way and I hurried and mucked out so I could use my new machine. The air hit the leg too fast and threw the machine against the roof. It almost beat me to death before I got it turned off.

That night I told Sleepy about buying a new machine and how wonderful it was. The next day I helped him hook it up and told him to go ahead and fire it up. I said I had to go out around the compressor but sneaked back to watch the fun. Sleepy turned on the air and you'd have thought it was Strangler Lewis in the world's heavyweight championship match the way he and that machine wrestled all over the drift. First the machine would be on top, then Sleepy would be on top. He finally got it turned off. I went strolling back and he was on his back, the machine on top of him, cussing.

"Didgie," he said, "how much money did you pay for that there machine?"

"Four hundred dollars," I told him.

"Good grief, man! You mean you paid $400 to get us beat up and maybe killed? Don't you have a lick of sense? Don't you white people ever get no sense?"

We put the machine against a rib and it sat there for five months before we had the nerve to fire it up again. We did eventually use it; after we got onto it, we did fine with it. It was a good old machine but Sleepy never did like it. We stayed on the big Thompson lease for about a year and made very good money. We each came out with close to $20,000.

ONE TIME Sleepy told me that a large mining corporation in the Mother Lode country wanted us to go down on the 4,000 level of their mine and straighten out a drift. It was a bad one. It was timbered solid and they weren't able to make any footage. They had a bunch of would-be miners in there who didn't know what they were doing.

We went to the mine and looked it over. It was caved bad. Timber was out for seven sets but we decided to sign the contract. Sleepy and I went down the next day and went to work. In four shifts we caught up on all the timber work and then we started making a round. We made a round and pulled a round and timbered solid to the breast. We drilled another round, blasted and timbered solid to the breast. We had everything under control and we started making footage. After two weeks of working we went to get our checks. The superintendent of the mine had withheld them and we had to go to the office to see why.

"I want to tell you fellas that your contract is being cut," he said. "I won't let you make this kind of money."

We told him we had a hard contract and the company had said that the sky was the limit.

He said, "I don't give a damn what the company said. That's more money than I make and you can't make that kind of money!"

Sleepy reached across the superintendent's desk and called the main office and got in touch with the president of the company and told him about the trouble. Well, the president of the company talked to the superintendent and straightened him out in a hurry.

The next day we didn't have a motorman to do anything for us and we couldn't get any timber. I was disgusted and ready to go back home but Sleepy went to the motorman. "Here," he said. "You've given us good service the past two weeks. Here's $50."

Next he went to the timber haulage boys and gave them $50 as a tip for keeping us in timber. You know, we had all the timber and all the cars we could want after that! It cost us quite a bit but we really pushed it hard. The job didn't last too long, as the contract was for only 400 feet, but we each averaged $85 dollars a day for three months. You ought to have heard that superintendent cry! When we finished 400 feet the company wanted us to take a contract on a raise. We thought we would until we found the same superintendent would be in charge so we pulled out and went to another mine.

About that time a Canadian mining corporation, Amex Uranium, got in touch with me and wanted me to be superintendent of all their U. S. operations. I took the job and asked Sleepy if he wanted to go with me but he wanted to stay because he had an exceptionally good contract and was making good money.

About ten days after I left, Sleepy was up in a 175-foot raise. Someway, somehow, he slipped and fell and that was the last of Sleepy, a good miner gone. I was very proud to call him my friend.

ONCE AFTER we had finished a job at Superior, Wyoming, Carl Wiser and I went to Sunnyside Mine near Price, Utah. These were coal mines whose blanket veins had dipped, and hardrock miners were called to drive incline shafts through the faults to reach the coal. In Price I met Jimmy Lynn. He wouldn't have weighed more than 120 pounds soaking wet but he was a braggart, always telling the world how brave he was and what a ladies' man he was. He'd tell us that he'd take three or four girls out at a time and show them a good time. He drove a Lincoln Zephyr V-12. Did I say he drove it? It seemed to me he flew low around the country.

Jimmy was a main-line motorman at the Sunnyside. It was seven miles from the portal of the mine inside to the main station. One afternoon the new day foreman decided to send an extra trip of twenty-five cars of rock out of the mine. He didn't call out to let anyone know he was sending it and that the night shift (ninety-two of us) should wait.

The Sunnyside was an old drift that had been driven around 1885 or 1890 by hand steel and it was very narrow. It wasn't built for big, wide twenty-five-ton Malley Electric Motors or the five-ton cars she was pulling. There was room to get through and that was all. The cars and motor just barely cleared the timbers.

As we were going in, the new day foreman sent the trip of rock out with his motorman. The foreman said later that he told the motorman to stop at the first switch and back up on the spur and wait for the night crew trip to go by. Whether he did or not I don't know but the motorman missed the first switch. It was a downhill grade coming out of the mine and the train was pulling twenty-five cars, each holding five tons of rock. About two miles in, we looked up and saw the headlight of the motor coming toward us. I mean it was really coming! Jimmy slapped on his brakes real quick and pulled the pin connecting the cars to the motor.

"Set your hand brakes!" he hollered to us.

He hadn't a chance to step clear so he r'ared up in his seat and kicked the motor wide open into that loaded trip and he stopped it! He saved men but he died. The other motorman died too. You know, it's strange! Jimmy was a guy who was always bragging about how brave he was. Well, he *was* brave. He proved it!

The drift was torn up so bad it took a week to clean it out. There wasn't a bone in Jimmy's body that wasn't broken. All the mines in the vicinity closed down for twenty-four hours the day Jimmy was buried. The very first shift of work after the services, every miner threw in his day's pay for Jimmy Lynn's mother and sisters.

STAN-THE-MAN and Red Mare came to rustle me for a job while I was

Courtesy Denver Public Library Western Collection

Durango, Colorado circa 1935. Near here the author went to work for Mike Brennan at the Neglected Mine.

superintendent for the Canadian Mining Company. I made Stan mine foreman of one of the operations. I put Red Mare as foreman of a crew at the Bowknot, where the best ore was located. Red was a good miner. He was an alcoholic but he could sure get the production.

One time I had to have some timber to make a chute and a tipple so I sent Red Mare into Grand Junction with a truck. Three days passed and no Red. Everything was tied up, waiting for the timber to come, so I started looking for him. I checked Moab and Thompson, Utah, and tried Cisco and finally went to Grand Junction. I called an office man at one of the uranium corporations to see if he had seen Red.

"I'm sure glad you called," he said. "I have your truck and it's loaded and I just about have it repaired."

He said that Red had gotten it all lined up to go, then had got to thinking he needed a drink and reported to the office that the truck radiator was broken. It sure was—Red had put a ballpeen hammer through it! Mr. Hamilton, the office man, ordered a new radiator but about that time the police station called to tell him Red was in jail for being drunk.

Hamilton bailed Red out and put him on a bus to the mine. Red got off the bus and the next thing Hamilton knew, Red was calling from the jail again. This time, the office man waited until the bus had started to roll before he left but Red stopped the bus a block down the street and got off.

The next day Red called Mr. Hamilton and wanted to borrow $10. Mr. Hamilton loaned him the money and bought him a few drinks. After I arrived in town, Red called and promised to meet us so I could drive him home. Well, he never met us. We searched the whole town. Three days later Red Mare came back out to the mine in a taxi. Mr. Hamilton had found him and told the driver not to stop anywhere from Grand Junction out to the mine. It was a 170-mile trip so it cost Red a pretty penny. Red stayed with us until the job was completed and he more than made up for that escapade, but I had to keep close rein on him.

A FELLOW named Big Dave was working there at that time. One day we made a nice strike. As a matter of fact, we shipped $1,250,000 worth of ore in about three months. I told the fellows to keep it quiet when they went in to town that weekend.

I had to go into the Wagon Wheel Bar on some business in Moab and there was Big Dave. As I walked up behind him, I could hear him saying, "Humph! Steen thinks he's got something! He oughta see the ore we're working. He oughta see what we've brought in."

A couple of guys, sitting down the bar, took it up and got to talking back and forth about the ore that Steen had. I guess they were working for him. Big Dave got it into his head that they were arguing and he told them, "Fellas, we won't have any arguments in here. We won't have any quarrels."

They continued their conversation and Big Dave got to thinking they were really going to start trouble and got up and walked over behind them and grabbed them and knocked their heads together. As they fell, each colder than a wedge, Big Dave said, "Now fellas, I told you there wouldn't be no quarreling in here. I can't stand violence."

A few days after that Big Dave was standing in front of the bank half swacked up. He wasn't bothering anybody but a man came staggering down the street and a police car pulled up and the cops got out to arrest him for being drunk. The drunk wasn't fighting, he was just needing a little help getting into the police car. But big Dave couldn't stand "violence" so he went over and whipped both cops. They called two more cops and he whipped them and finally it took six of them to get him to jail. It cost me $275 to get Big Dave out—plus the guarantee that he never would come back to Moab again.

You take a combination of Red Mare, Big Dave, and Stan-the-Man on any one job and you had your hands full. That Stan-the-Man was a wonderful miner and a wonderful guy but when he got drunk he got drunk all over. He was five feet tall, with a waist of about sixty-two inches. Not much fat, just a huge chest and a stomach to go with it.

While I was on that job I collapsed and had to have surgery. I had a growth that turned out to be cancerous. Stan-the-Man, Big Dave and Red Mare ran the job while I was the hospital.

They did a first class job. Stan-the-Man upped production quite a bit. Every other day he'd come to the hospital and have reports all made out for me to sign. For awhile I was too sick to read them but I signed them and he sent them on to Canada and everything went along smoothly. It went so smooth that the Apex Mining Corporation picked up all the tabs for my surgery and the hospital bills. Stan-the-Man, when he'd come to town, he'd say, "Didgie, I wish you'd hurry and get out of this hospital so that I could have a beer. Boy! I just want one beer, Didgie, but I won't take it till you get out of the hospital."

Well, it was a good thing he didn't. He knew what one beer could do. One beer would call for one case and one case would call for ten more. Then he'd swing over to whiskey and he'd be off on a good one. He didn't do any drinking while I was in the hospital and he was in charge of the operation. After about two months, when I was back on the job again he asked me if he could have a few days off. He wanted to go into Thompson and tie a short one on. He deserved some time off, so I agreed.

I didn't hear from him for three weeks; then he called long distance from Reno. He was wanting some money to come home. I sent him a plane ticket and $15. He did all right. He cashed the plane ticket and wired for more money.

I wound up sending him the money he had coming to him from the company, a little bit at a time, in about four installments. About five weeks after he had drawn the last of the money he came walking into camp. He looked like the wrath of God but he went back to work and stayed with the job until it was finished three or four months later.

AFTER THE uranium boom slowed a little bit I took over a lease on Temple Mountain. Stan-the-Man worked for me. When I went there I had money sticking out of every pocket, but the lease didn't pan out. I walked out broke. That's the way a leaser's life goes! You've either got money sticking out of every pocket or you haven't got anything. But I've been fortunate; I've had it more often than not.

T-Bone and Butt Block started working together around the turn of the century in Butte. I understand T-Bone got his name because one night in the Finlander Boarding House he sat down and ate six T-bone steaks for supper. He was working with Butt Block at the Belmont Mine. As they came out of the raise one night T-Bone told some fellows, "You know, I almost fixed my partner up good today. You know how slow he moves and how he sits around? Well, we was up there in the station and settin' our timber and I reached up and got ahold of him and purt near put him in place for a butt block before I found out it was my partner." That's how Butt Block got his nickname.

In all the years I knew them they were inseparable. I never knew their real names. I don't believe anyone in the mining camps—except maybe the payroll officers—knew them by anything except T-Bone and Butt Block. They were wild ones, but we were always the first to come and ask if you were holding anything. When a digger comes into camp rustling work, other diggers walk up and ask him how he is holding. If the digger isn't holding very much—well, first one will hand him $20, then another will hand him $20, and so on down the line to see him through until he has a payday. It is a pretty good custom. Butt Block and T-Bone were really up front in that. They pieced off their share all the way through.

They didn't like to lease. They said it was too much effort and too long between paydays. That was silly because they'd hire out to some fellow on a lease and work for four or five months and not draw a cent. They'd only stay because the guy needed them and they didn't have the money to get out of camp. That was the way they were.

One time they were breaking rock at Shelite, Nevada. A couple of diggers came up and started talking. They had been down to the office but had been told there were no openings. Butt Block looked at T-Bone and asked him how many shifts they had in. T-Bone told him they had eighteen. Butt Block said, "Well, I think it's time for us to move on so the boys can go to work." They took the two diggers to the rustling office and told them they were quitting so those boys could go to work.

They mined in every camp from Telluride to Silverton clear over to the Mother Lode Country, and from Bisbee, Arizona, to Butte, Montana. They knew everybody. They were good miners. They worked hard, drank hard, and supported about half the cathouses in the country. They didn't have any responsibility but they sure loved each other.

I remember when Butt Block and T-Bone were working in the Orphan Girl on the 1,100 foot-level. As they were going past the working place on the intermediate they heard a couple of fellows talking. They were just about to hole through but the steel had come out the other side and Butt and T-Bone could hear everything they said. A fellow had been killed the week before and these two kids were talking about ghosts.

Butt Block and T-Bone listened for awhile. Then T-Bone put his chuck wrench on the steel and slowed it down and held on so they couldn't pull it out no matter how hard they tried. Pretty soon they let go and T-Bone pulled it out his end. Those kids ran all the way down to the station and went upstairs and quit. They just knew a ghost had grabbed that steel and pulled it out the other side!

When automatic liners first came out, T-Bone and Butt Block were working in the big gyp basin near the Colorado-Utah border. They were good liner men, good drift men, but they had never used anything but the screw-tail liner (a screw-tail liner has a big long screw that you twist in to push the liner up on the cradle). The automatic liners worked by hydraulic system. They'd walk up by themselves and when they were drilled out, they'd kick and slide clear back.

The old-timers used to hold one hand on the cradle of the machine as they cranked her. T-Bone hired out on this new automatic liner. He didn't know anything about it so as he drilled he automatically put his hand on the cradle. It snapped back, and off went one of T-Bone's fingers. He was taken to Telluride to the doctor and was patched up. When he came back to the mine and went downstairs, hand all bandaged, he was asked how in the devil he managed to lose a finger on that liner. He said, "Well, I lost it like this." He rested his hand on the cradle of the machine that was drilling out. The automatic liner snapped back and off went another finger! They ribbed T-Bone for years about that but he never again demonstrated how he lost those two fingers.

Butt Block and T-Bone aren't with us anymore. They were killed a few years ago in a big mine explosion in Colorado. Like many diggers, I feel there was gross negligence on the company's side because they had plenty of warning from miners and from the superintendent foreman of the danger. They neglected to take care of it—greed, I suppose.

The big explosion killed every man on the night shift (thirty-five, I believe). I was working at Leadville at the time and went down on the rescue crew. A bunch of us went in to carry out the dead. I didn't think I knew anybody there but it was just my luck, on our first trip down, to find T-Bone. He wasn't even burned bad. I sat down and cried. Finally I walked up the drift about twenty feet and there lay Butt Block. That's the way they died, underground, going to work together. I just kind of wonder if T-Bone ever showed anyone in the hereafter how he lost two fingers.

KOKOMO JOE was about the oldest of the old-timers I knew. We lost him in 1962. He was ninety-four or ninety-five when he died, though, so he had lived a good full life. He got his name from Kokomo, Colorado, a short distance out of Leadville.

I have been told that Kokomo Joe staked the Kokomo Mine which in later years worked several hundred men and produced many millions of dollars. If he did open it, he didn't realize much out of it because in all the years I knew him he was just a digger.

He was a lot of fun, but sort of wild. He never stayed at any camp more than sixty days in his life. Every kid around got to know him and would wait for him when he came off shift. He always had a bunch of nickels in his lunchbucket and would give the bucket to the kids and watch them raid it. He never had a family of his own. The kids in the camps—they were his family.

After Kokomo blasted he didn't wait for the smoke to clear to go barging into a murky tunnel. He'd go floundering around, climbing back over his muck pile, to see how his round had pulled—and you could bet it had pulled! He was an all-around good miner. He hewed his own timbers, cut his own hitches, and they were always perfect. In his last years, when he was too old to work, he was still making the camps. The boarding house doors were always open to him and the diggers always had a buck to hand him. Kokomo in his time was a hard-working man, a hard-drinking man, and a hard-playing man. He could tell you just exactly how much had been taken out of this mine or that mine, and how many feet of drift had been driven in any mine that he had ever worked.

About twenty years ago, two men were trapped in the New Deal Mine. We were trying to get them and having no luck. We'd get a little muck taken out but it was caving fast. Kokomo heard about it and came up where we were working and said, "Well now, fellas, unless there's been a solid cave, there's a drift running down from the Bonanza shaft, which is about 400 feet over from where they are trapped. There's no reason you couldn't get to them by going down through the Bonanza."

He sat down and drew a map of the Bonanza Mine. He also drew a map of the New Deal and of the drift that connected them. We set a tripod over the shaft of the Bonanza and took about 300 feet of rope and made a boatswain's chair. I got in and went down in the Bonanza. As I neared the New Deal I found the drift that Kokomo had told me about. No one had been down in the Bonanza for over sixty years but I followed Kokomo's directions and it was

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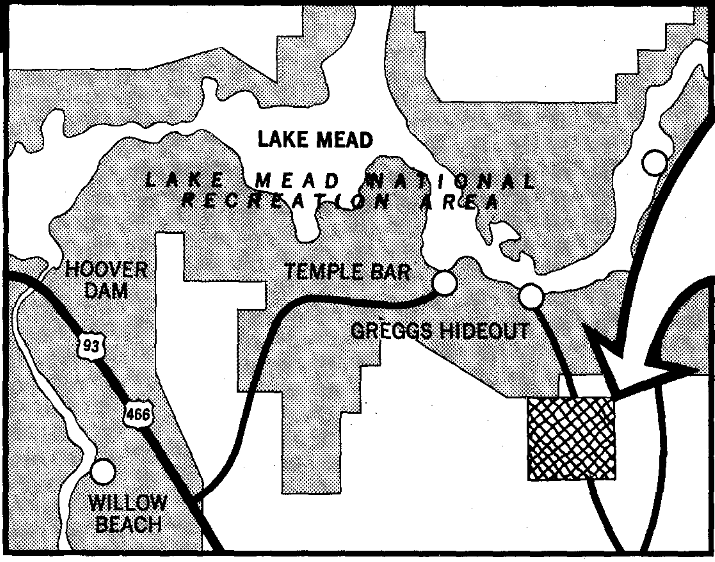

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just as he had said it was.

When I got back in there I scared the trapped miners. They were getting air, but they didn't know from where. They couldn't find any way out. I came in over them. There was an old raise that didn't have a ladder in it that dropped down to where they were. I hollered down the raise and it scared them pretty good. Then I dropped a rope to them and they worked their way up the rope to where I was. We went back through the drift into the Bonanza and were pulled to the top of the ground again.

Old Kokomo was waiting. He wanted to know if it was just like he had told me and I told him it was. I've always wanted to go back in the old Bonanza to do some prospecting there. I saw some fairly good looking leads of ore. There was no timber in the shaft at the time I went down and there were big boulders hanging out from the edge all the way down. It was a pretty rough chore to swing down the way I did that day. I wouldn't do it for pastime.

Kokomo told me about another mine nearby that he thought would be good property if a person could obtain it. He told me he could show me good ore there. "Okay," I said, "let's go."

It took us all day long to get back to the cave. We went over it and dropped into water up to our armpits. Kokomo led me to good ore and we cut samples and came back out and decided to get a lease and work it together. We opened it just to get the high grade ore he had shown me. We got it in about thirty days and it ran $10,000—well worth the time and the effort!

He knew a lot of places like that. Miners used to hide or cover up good veins of ore as they went through, in hopes they would be able to return and get a lease. I guess it still happens, though I haven't heard of it for some time.

HERE'S A STORY that Kokomo used to tell on himself. I'm not sure it is true but he seemed to get a great bang out of telling it. He said that he'd gone down around Bisbee to work in the Copper Queen. He got a drift he was working in all straightened out and drilled out and got ready to load out and blast when he hit a coyote hole. He started punching powder in that air pocket and never did get it filled up. He finally dumped four of five boxes of powder in it and blasted, certain he'd torn up the whole drift. He didn't even go back to see what happened. He just went home without drawing his pay.

About a year later he came back into Bisbee and started rustling mines for a job. It was during the depression and he went from one mine to another and, as a last resort, went back to the Copper Queen. When he came to the window, he saw the same shifter he had worked for before, doing the hiring.

He tried to duck his head and walk past but the shifter saw him and said, "Hey, just a minute! You're Kokomo Joe, aren't you?"

Kokomo admitted that he was.

The shifter said, "You know, you've got a good check coming to you. That last time you worked for us, you made some pretty good footage. I wish you'd come back and work for us for just three more days because it took our muckers three weeks to clean up your last round!"

I remember the last time I was with Kokomo. I had a good uranium lease over in the Yellow Cat in Utah. The mine was very shallow. Kokomo came along and I gave him a job pulling chutes. T-Bone was working on the main line for me tramming. Kokomo was a little too old to pull chutes but with T-Bone helping it worked out fine.

I was using Trojan powder and loaded out a 43-hole round. Trojan is a smoke-free powder enabling one to see pretty well after a blast, so I went in and started to get the ore down to the chute. I had a couple of trucks outside waiting to be loaded and I wanted to hurry and get the chore done. It was hotter than the milltails of hell in that place from the gas created by the explosion. There was no air coming in and the gas knocked me out. I don't know why Kokomo decided to come in and look around. Maybe he just had a hunch, or maybe it was just the same old Kokomo, curious to see how the round pulled. Anyway, he came up and there I was all stretched out real nice. He dragged me back to the air and he and T-Bone put a rope under my arms and lowered me down the raise to the main drift where there was a lot of air. I came around in about fifteen minutes and sick! Oh boy, I was really sick!

DURING World War II we were short of metal, short of equipment, and short of timber. The armed services would not accept a miner. If a miner insisted on enlisting, they would let him enlist and then assign him on duty to the mines. The Army also transferred many able-bodied men to the mines. At times we worked fifty feet ahead of our timber in bad ground. We took long chances and were quite proud that we were doing service for our country.

There were times though that we weren't so proud. When the troop trains came through Butte, the soldier-boys would holler "4-F-ers!" at us and sometimes get very insulting. The trains never stopped long enough to square things around or there probably would have been some good brawls.

Due to the lack of timber, bad ground, and green hands we averaged over a casualty a day for a year. If a company of soldiers had that many casualties in a year they had to be having rough going, so I guess we were in as rough going as anywhere.

I think the women in the camp had it harder than the men. In this particular camp (Spring Canyon) the hospital sat on a hill about two miles from the shaft. Company houses stretched in a long line from the hospital to the mine shaft. When an accident occurred in the mine the ambulance shrieked through the canyon and every woman whose man was on shift went through hell for awhile. She had no way of knowing if it was her man or not. She didn't need to worry about a telegram. If it was her man, she could go to the hospital and see him if he were alive or go to Duggan's to see him if he were dead.

I was a pusher on that job and sent men places to work that no man should have ventured into. Maybe it's like Stan-the-Man said, "We had to have the ore and we had to get it the best way we could, timber or no timber, bad ground or no bad ground."

I just wish there was some way people could know what those kids did and how hard they tried. I remember one time we were in a drift we couldn't hold. We'd set rows of breaker timber about sixty feet back in the drift but we didn't have timber to log with (box it in). We had a lot of equipment at the breast of the mine. The ore wasn't too good so we decided to pull back. We had rail and pipe, machines and steel that we couldn't afford to lose. I asked a pusher by the name of Baker if he'd give me a hand because everyone else was as green as grass.

It doesn't take an experienced man to pull up rail, take down air and water pipe or carry equipment but it does take an experienced man to be able to listen to ground as it talks, to tell whether it is getting ready to come deep or shallow. You can tell by the rumble if it is coming and you have a minute or less to try to get clear.

Baker and I were lugging the equipment and the ground was talking quite a bit. We knew we should have said, "To hell with it," but we needed the equipment badly. We were right up at the breast when she cut real deep and the bottom heaved hard.

Baker yelled, "It's time to go!"

We started on a run for the breaker timbers, Baker in the lead. A little more than half way to the timbers I fell. Baker glanced back and saw me on the ground and he did a very brave thing. He ran back to me and rolled me against the wall and threw himself down between my legs just as the cave came. She caved deep for about fifty feet. A big slab of rock fell at an angle over us. It was about five feet thick and a perfect shelter for us. There were many thousands of tons of rock on top of us but the way that big rock lay we didn't have a pound of pressure against us but it was hard breathing because of the dust.

WE DECIDED to lie real quiet and breathe shallow in hopes of conserving air until a rescue crew reached us. We heard them working toward us with breaker hammers and really got scared, knowing they might crack the rock that was holding the slide off us.

After six hours of tense waiting, we heard them working and talking close at hand. I was the nearest to the rescue crew and hollered at them to take it easy. They heard me. One miner was so scared when he heard me he ran all the way out of the mine, about two-and-a-half miles. They said he never stopped.

The rescue squad had a problem getting us free without killing us. We told them we were not pinned down with any weight. Baker's hands were above his head and I could maneuver one hand above mine so they moved rock ahead of us until they had a large enough opening to push long poles with hooks on them down into the cave. Finally I was able to get a hold on a hook. It took eight men to pull us free. Baker caught my feet and went along for the ride. How I managed to hang onto the hook with one hand, I don't know. They only had to pull us about twenty feet but that was the longest twenty feet I ever traveled.

That night on the way home we passed a troop train and the boys hollered "4-F-ers!" and I guess those loudmouth soldiers wondered why Baker threw a rock through the window of their car.

I was in another cave-in one time. I had been sent by a large mining corporation to look at a property that had been closed down since 1913. A fellow by the name of Don Spencer went with me to the mine. The ground had thawed that year and the mine entrance had caved. We worked for several days making room to get through the cave and cut samples. While I was back in there, the ground shifted and the timber kicked out and the entrance caved much worse than it had been before. Don rushed to Silverton and brought miners up to start digging around the clock to get to me.

At no time was I in any danger, although after about ten hours my light went out and, of course, I was quite hungry and scared before the eight days were up. I didn't hear the workmen until some thirteen or fourteen hours before they reached me. Hearing them move that muck was a wonderful sound!

When they reached me I bummed a cigarette and when I stepped outside I saw a sight that hurts me to remember. My wife Ruth was in an old building that had been the office and she had aged forty years during that eight days. When I'd left for work she'd been a beautiful girl. I remember she had been giving me the devil about some minor thing. When I came out of the mine, I saw deep lines in her face that were etched there forever. She died many times while I was trapped.

People who knew the mine tried to tell her there was lots of air, lots of good water, but she couldn't buy it. All through my life, in the camps of different mines over the West, I've seen the wives of miners suffer and I've heard more than one woman say she hated the deep mines and it made her sick every time the disaster whistle blew or the ambulance headed out.

When my first wife died several years ago, I thought my life was used up. I wondered why I couldn't go like T-Bone, Butt Block, Jumbo, Sleepy and many others. Later on I met a fine person. I remarried. I have been happy and I have had the privilege of helping two new sons who needed a father badly. I hope, someday, I'll be able to erase the bad memories some people have of Didgie Blast, the drunk. Since I've been sober I've tried to make up for those years by helping people when I can.

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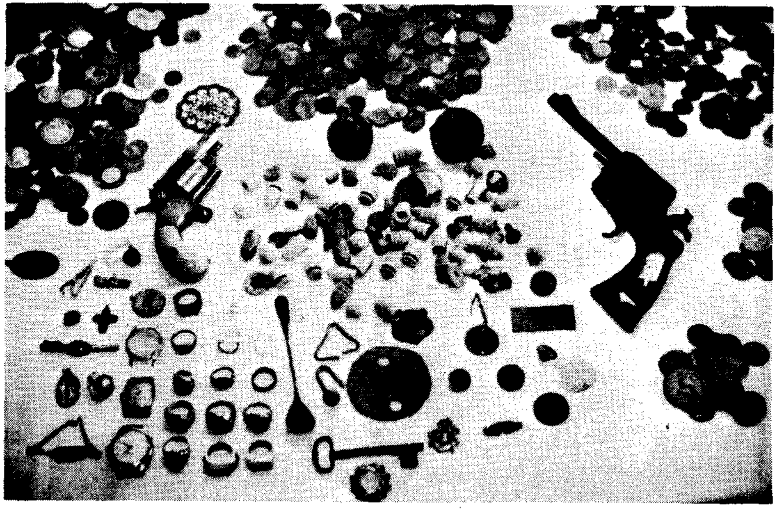

Ernest J. Clark writes; "In three weeks since I received my Gardiner Model 190A Metal Detector, I have found a total of approximately $685 worth of miscellaneous coins, jewelry and artifacts. Some of the coins dated back to 1802. I think the features of this metal detector are really way ahead of all the other makes, especially in the fact that it will distinguish bottle caps and other worthless items."

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LETTER RIP!

Dear Editor:

While thumbing through the back pages of the Spring 1969 OLD WEST, I came upon some pictures which I thought looked awfully familiar. The more I looked at them, the more I had reason to believe that I had seen them before, Then, my curiosity aroused, I turned to the start of the story and there was the title, *A Drummer's Experience* by J. S. Dearing.

Yes, those pictures were all familiar to me—in fact the whole book was familiar—because I knew J. S. Dearing very well indeed. He was my grandfather.

As far as I know he has only two close relatives alive, my brother and myself. Many have been the times that my brother and I played among piles of this very book and of course thumbed through its pages looking at the pictures.

I have no idea how the book came into your hands and it really makes no difference, but my grandfather never did have much success in selling his book. I venture to say it will probaby have more success being printed in your magazine than it had in book form.

I know of one or two trips he made to promote his book but with little success. I believe the last of his copies went via the auction block after the death of my grandmother.

My grandfather was a very ambitious person. If one thing failed, he found something that succeeded. And I might say that he was this way up until the time of his death at the age of ninety-one. If my memory is correct the year of his passing was either late 1949 or early 1950.

Many are the tales I could tell of my grandfather, but that is not the purpose of this letter. I just wanted you to know that publication of *A Drummer's Experience* has recalled memories from the past by one who knew the author well.

In closing, I quote from the introduction of the book, "Here's to your health." —D. B. Wilson, 2408 West Platte Avenue, Colorado Springs, Colorado 80904

Dear Editor:

José Policarpo Rodriguez's book, *The Old Guide* in Winter 1968 OLD WEST is about the best durn thing I've ever read in your magazines. Having been born in western Bandera County, Texas and reared in Polly's country, I was privileged as a youth to hear from old-timers thereabouts many an interesting yarn about Polly's adventures. I thought you might like to share with your readers this old photo of Polly and his bride which was published in *The Bandera Bulletin* of December 6, 1968, along with a story of Polly's life written by James S. Maverick, a member of another long-standing family of that area.—H. V. O'Bryant, 2014 Fourth Street, Galena Park, Texas 77547

Dear Pat:

I received a phone call from my old partner Howard McCrory a few nights ago, the first I've heard from him since 1948. Also enclosed is a letter I received sometime back from California. I should have sent it to you sooner.

"Dear Bob Estes:

"I am George Yardley's mother and am writing to let you know how much we enjoyed your story ["Dodge City, Venezuela"] in the Winter 1968 OLD WEST.

"George was very pleased and we bought ten copies of the magazine. I have an excellent picture of George bulldogging in Fort Worth. George just happened to buy OLD WEST at the newsstand and was delighted with your story and said it was exactly as you wrote it. George sends his regards. Sincerely, Betty Yardley Orr, 8677 Southgate Avenue, South Gate, California 90280."

Howard also was delighted with the story.—Bob Estes, Box 962, Baird, Texas 79504

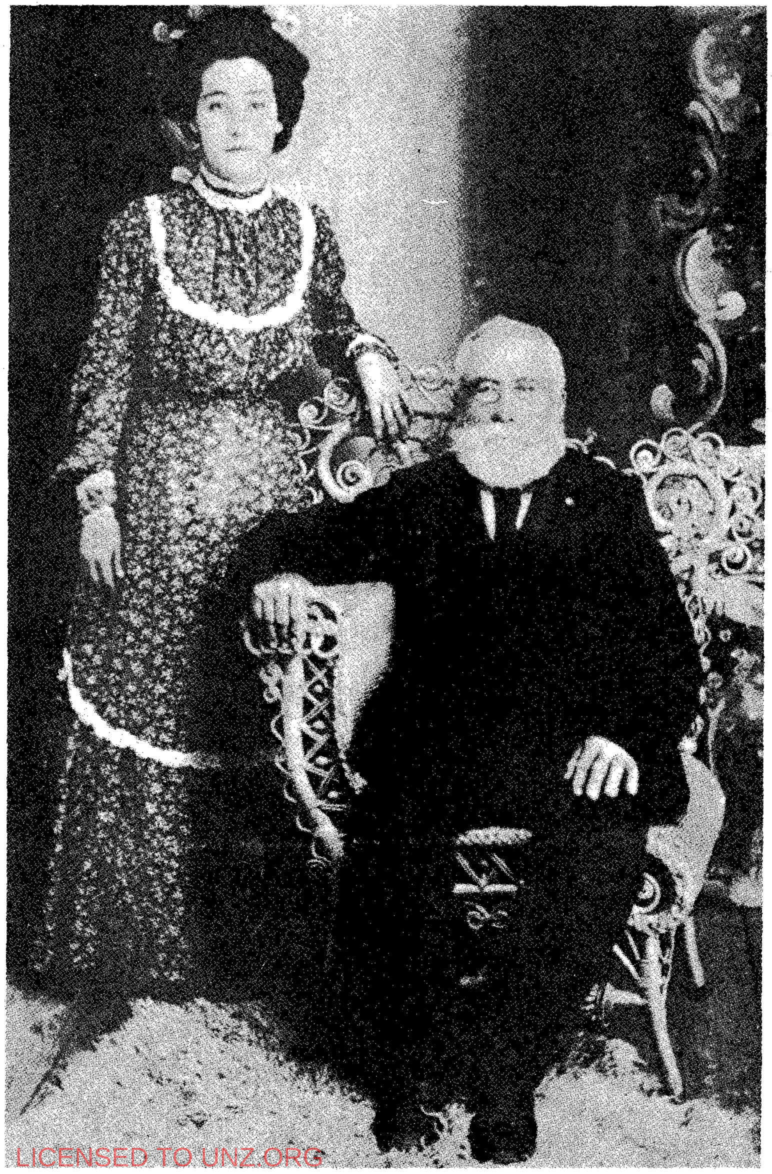
Dear Sir:

Received the Spring 1969 OLD WEST yesterday and really enjoyed it last night. G. K. told his story about right. One thing he didn't tell was how quiet it was at night when there was trouble in Yegua Knobbs country. It was so quiet you could hear one of his fleas sneeze.—G. F. Stewart, McDade, Texas 78650

Dear Editor:

My folks migrated from Lamar, Colorado to the Cheyenne and Arapaho country in western Oklahoma in February 1900 with two covered wagons and about thirty head of loose horses. I was sixteen

Jose Policarpo "Polly" Rodriguez, 75, and his bride of two months, Anastacia Salinas Rodriguez, 16, on December 1, 1903. Polly had been a widower for some time. He and Anastacia had four children, and before the first of these were born Polly had great-grandchildren from his first marriage.



years old and it was my job to drive them. They were fat from a winter on that wonderful cured buffalo grass. In fact I remember there were sections between Springfield and Carrizo Canyon where the grass was so thick my horse's feet did not touch the dirt but trod on the grass like a deep Brussels carpet.

Somewhere on that stretch of prairie we drove down the main street of a town in which there was nothing left but the white stone foundations. We were told it had been called Carrizo City. At another point we crossed a section where the heavily grassed ground was ridged like a washboard. When I was fortunate enough to meet a cowboy and ask him what caused it he said, "Oh, the damn fools from the East came here twenty-five years ago and plowed it up to plant corn and oats, but when the crops burned up they moved out without working down the lister ridges."

We kept a southwesterly course from Springfield until we fell off into Carrizo Canyon. The hill was so steep some drivers dragged a log behind the wagons but Dad was an old freighter and I believe he rough-locked his wheels. At that time there was a lively little town just starting in the canyon called Copper City and several tunnels in the mountains which seemed to be producing valuable copper ore. However, it was about eighty miles to Trinidad which seemed to have been the nearest railway. They offered Dad a dollar a hundred to haul ore but it was not enough for the kind of roads they had.

That week is memorable for two things: I went to my first country dance and on my first mountain lion hunt. Dad saw a cat on a ledge one morning when he went for the horses and I took the old Winchester and tracked him every day for a week without a glimpse of him. We went out down the Carrizo by way of Kenton and then drove the Cimarron for at least one day. We camped one night at what I remember as the Medcalf Ranch where I saw and heard my first "talking machine," an old Victrola with rolls and a great horn. One of the songs rendered was about a woman on a bicycle. All I remember is one line, "Then I saw her fall, and then I saw her all, couldn't help it—I had tooooo."

East across "No Man's Land" we did not see a house or a human and only one windmill for seventy-five miles.—D. Ivan Fritts, 794 Fortner Lane, Ontario, Oregon 97914

Dear Fellow Readers:

I hope someone can help me find a picture that was taken in August of 1943 or '44 near Fort Sumner, New Mexico of a man on a horse. The people were from the East and took this man's picture because "He was the first cowboy (they) saw." This man was my father. If a picture sent is not the one, it will be returned. If it is the right one, however, I'll send a picture of Abe Lincoln (on a $5 bill, of course).—Judy Casaday, Box 43, Melrose, New Mexico 88124

Dear Joe:

Dee Bibb, well-known rancher and one-

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Bibb astride Ol' Duckhunter during his heyday on the cowboy circuit.

time world champion steer bulldogger, died at his ranch near Las Vegas, New Mexico on October 12, 1968, at age seventy-five. A resident of Las Vegas for the past fifty years, Bibb was a colorful personality noted for his wit and humor and his western music as well as for his record as a top-hand rodeo contestant of years gone by. He is survived by his wife, Mabel, one son, and three daughters.

The range that he rode was a wide one;
His friendships were many and deep,
So now that his saddle is empty,
God rest him at ease in his sleep.

—S. Omar Barker, Las Vegas, New Mexico 87701

Lola Montez—Man Breaker

(Continued from page 9)

the Barbary Coast wharf to greet her, surging en masse through the mud-choked streets. All work ceased. Unkempt, unwashed and bearded men had spruced up and donned their best attire for the occasion. Just a glimpse of this fabulous lady would have satisfied many; but others fought for the privilege of being in the theatre's front rows, fostering bad feelings which were later to claim lives in "affairs of honor." The old doggerel of "Mary had a little lamb with fleece as white as snow, and everywhere that Mary went, the lamb was sure to go," as applied to Lola, might have been echoed:

Lola loved the wealthy man
Who had a lot of dough
And everywhere that Lola went
Blood was sure to flow!

In Europe men had fought duels for her love. In the Middle East where seductive dancing is the rule, Lola's brand of the Dance of the Tarantulas excited Egyptians and Arabians alike to carving up anatomies simply for a wayward smile from her inviting lips. And Lola Montez, plaything of kings and diplomats, reportedly loved to inspire fights for her favor.

It was a clear day when Lola Montez arrived on the Barbary Coast. As if to lift its usual veil of fog in her honor, the Golden Gate was bathed in warm sunshine. The hastily-built wharf swayed under the impact of the windjammer's docking. Even before the ship was tied up, the seductive figure of Lola Montez could be seen standing on the after deck. Her cheeks flushed and a smile of anticipation curved her lips as she gazed down upon the sea of eager faces. Wind whipping up the Golden Gate caused her ruffled skirts to first cling tightly to her slender figure, then balloon up around her, revealing bright red undergarments, bringing an echoing roar of approval from the women-hungry miners.

NONE was more determined to gain her attention than a tall, handsome adventurer who battled his way through the mob. He had lost his beaverskin hat in the melee. It lay trampled in the muck of Market Street. There was a bold, triumphant glitter in his Irish blue eyes when he made the gangplank. A burly ship's officer stood in his way and was promptly slammed into the bay by a jolting right fired at him by Patrick Hull, gallant, two-fisted, fast-shooting Forty-Niner and assistant editor of the *Courier*.

Pat Hull was imbued with one desire only—to gain the favor of the glamorous, sensual Lola Montez by seeing her safely through the frenzied mob. That certain indescribable something possessed by only a few women had enveloped this courageous young man and he had the temerity to want her for his own. Nothing else mattered.

Pat Hull immediately struck a responsive chord in Lola Montez, but like a good many men before him, he was destined to become just so much clay in her hands. It is doubtful if any other woman in American history enjoyed a more varied life than the devilish Lola. Her sole aim in life appeared to center around masculine conquest. Pat Hull failed to recognize that quirk in her nature.

He did know, as a newspaperman, that she had humbled King Ludwig of Bavaria and left him flat when his empire collapsed—only after she had acquired from him, among other treasures, the title of the Countess of Lanfield. It is alleged that King Ludwig was so enamoured of her, so insanely jealous, that he beheaded a court attache merely for gazing at her overly long. He is claimed to have fought at least three duels at her insistence.

Lola Montez, in spite of her name, was not of the Spanish *gente fina* or Spanish anything else. In fact she was Irish, born Rosanna Gilbert in Ireland in 1818. How her Thespian traits were inspired seems to be unknown, but she was a born dancer and a talented actress. At least she had a talent for originality, and was a veritable specialist in belly dancing.

Some reports declare she was a native of Turkey; others claim she was the illegitimate daughter of Lord Byron and a woman from a Scottish village, the result of a love tryst held by the pair in Newstead Abbey. Like Byron she had curly dark hair and seductive blue eyes, also typical, however, of some Spanish beauties. Lola herself endeavored to spread the word that she was of noble parentage, having been kidnapped by gypsies and spirited to Spain. Her adventures and experiences with the crowned heads of Europe do seem to belie her common birth. One thing is certain—she had what it takes to ensnare a man regardless of his blood-strain or position in life. Notably, Pat Hull in the United States. He was to rue the day he ever assisted her to embark in San Francisco.

LOLA MONTEZ arrived in New York in 1851, and soon took the city by storm. Her intricate and sometimes suggestive Tarantula Dance immediately won wide acclaim, notwithstanding some highly raised eyebrows of the elite. The dance was a mixture of weird bouncing movements from stage wings to stage wings, like a spider pouncing upon its prey, coupled with sensual diaphragm movements designed to cause the hair to crawl at the base of a man's neck.

Press critics were quick to identify her as the Tarantula Lady. If they were aware that the sting of her love was fatal at that time, none mentioned it in the reviews. Perhaps the outspoken New York critics were simply being conservative with their remarks. Assuredly Patrick Hull was ignorant of that fact until he suffered her sting. How fatal it was remains to be seen.

In San Francisco men paid as high as $1,000 in gold dust to witness her premiere performance the night of her arrival, As surmised, Pat Hull managed the chore of escorting her to her hotel without souvenir hunters ripping off her clothing. If she lost anything it was certainly not her self-respect. And if she had created a storm of welcome in the East, the West went for her like a full-grown tornado. Who escorted her from the hotel to the Jenny Lind Theatre is in doubt,, but Pat Hull as the reviewer for the *Courier* was on hand and ensconced in the front row, ready and eager to witness her performance.

Lola Montez performed to a packed house and received a standing ovation. Pat Hull was witness to the crush of human bodies surging around him, whooping, yelling, roaring for more. One would have expected him to reach into the heavens for words of appreciation for her act. Being immersed in a deep, unexplainable infatuation for her, he could be expected to go the limit of praise in his review.

Not only was San Francisco stunned the next day when Pat's review appeared on the streets, Lola Montez suffered the greatest shock of her career. Accustomed to acclaim, she received a thorough panning. Long fingernails must have bitten into the palms of her hands when she read the hateful words. Up to now she had thought all men alike. Here was one, Pat Hull, insignificant press reviewer, who was different, who had the bad sense to criticize her, Lola Montez.

She did not realize that Pat Hull was also a man of some morality in a place where morals were seldom encountered. He was in love with Lola Montez and it is understandable he did not wish to see her expose herself as she had done in her Dance of the Tarantulas. Furthermore, he was prepared to pan every

(Continued on page 59)

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Reporting a Gold Rush

(Continued from page 25)

And he remained in a happy frame of mind to the last. For instance, he thought it funny when the expedition discovered that the maps were wrong in showing the 104th meridian, the boundary between Dakota and Wyoming, as passing through the Black Hills. They found, on the contrary, that the Hills were a bit farther east.

Not so Davenport. He sneered that Jenney had come out with a preconceived notion based on erroneous maps and had marched a whole day trying to deny the accuracy of astronomical observations made by his own people.

Davenport's sneer characterized his entire attitude toward Jenney. Earlier he had reported that Dodge was the virtual leader of the expedition and that even the "practical miners" overshadowed Jenney in the popular estimation. He said the opinions of the miners would have more influence upon those persons interested in the Black Hills than "that of a whole college of professional scholars." More, he wrote, old-timers "laugh at the idea of the assumed ability of a geologist to determine whether a deposit of precious metal will yield sufficient profit to be of great value when tested."

During the march, Davenport frequently rode with a scout far ahead of the main column, causing Dodge to call him down for recklessness.

SOON AFTER the expedition took the trail, Dodge discovered among the teamsters one Calamity Jane. She often dressed as a man and cussed with the best muleskinners. Unable to permit a woman to remain in the column, he yet could not send her packing, not out there. So they played a game. Each day Dodge ordered her from camp; each day she remained in camp until the last wagons were leaving; then she slipped into one. Having a certain allure in retrospect, the story made little contemporary impression. MacMillan reported her presence only as an afterthought; none of Davenport's stories even mentioned her.

Picking up Custer's trail into the Black Hills on June 10, in a snowstorm, they headed toward the Gordon Stockade, gold being found in minute quantity along the way. As they neared the real gold area, MacMillan showed his own increasing excitement:

"I need hardly inform the *Inter Ocean's* readers that on ordinary occasions the restrained excitement in a camp over the near approach to a supposed goldfield only requires the finding of color a few miles from the gold region to fan into a blaze the smoldering flame. Each man is impatient and chafing. Today we leave this camp in the canyon of Spring Creek, and by this afternoon we will have decided who were right on the gold question in the Black Hills—General Custer and the *Inter-Ocean* or Professor Winchell and his supporters."

The command left Spring Creek early on the morning of June 14, Jenney remaining behind to prospect. Skirmishers scoured the flanks, "all eager to catch and sketch the first and faintest glimpse of that land reputed to bear in its hitherto hidden recesses wealth in dust alone sufficient to meet the debt of a nation."

So eager was MacMillan, in fact, that he surged ahead with an advance party of two lieutenants and two civilians, one of whom, A. F. Long, had been ejected from the Gordon Stockade in the spring. About mid-morning the advance party excitedly neared the spot that would in the future be variously known as Harney City, Camp Harney and Custer. The five horsemen spurred forward; MacMillan's horse lunged ahead, making him first in the known gold region.

Using a wash basin, a cake pan and an empty fruit tin, MacMillan and his friends fell to work washing gravel from French Creek. "Color was panned out of the first handful of gravel that was taken from the bank," he wrote. Experienced miners estimated it would bring $18 an ounce. Later he sent to the *Inter Ocean* gold that he had washed.

When the rest of the column arrived, news of the gold spread "like wildfire." MacMillan added: "Almost every man in camp by evening could say that he had with his hands found good gold. The skeptical no longer doubted, as ocular evidence was beyond all question. . . . And all the command were of opinion that the result of that day's investigation had decided the veracity of General Custer as against Professor Winchell."

Able to write a major story, and an exclusive one because Davenport had not yet come up, MacMillan was silenced by distance. He could not forward a story until a courier should leave with dispatches for Fort Laramie. Not for two days then did he write his story, finally datelining it June 16. A courier took it to Fort Laramie where it went on the wire June 22, one of the few times he used the telegraph. On the morning of June 23 the *Inter Ocean* plunked his story in the middle of a six-column front page under the head:

THEY HAVE FOUND IT.

In a more detailed mail story which appeared June 30 he exuded: "There is wealth for an empire here, and what with silver, which has also been discovered, and iron, and galena, and plumbago, should be in themselves fortunes for thousands."

DAVENPORT was not among the enthusiastic when he arrived June 17. Although he conceded French Creek was "in the midst of a gold field of unknown extent," he sought to throw cold water on the whole thing. Having talked with some of the prospectors whom the Jenney-Newton expedition had surprised at work in the creek, he reported: "They emphatically assured us that there was plenty of gold all along the stream and quartz lodes containing it in the Hills. They panned out a few shovels of dirt in our presence and obtained a few flakes of the most finely colored gold." But he insisted, "No one except infatuated miners yet entertain a strong belief that the gold field is of much extent or that it will yield to enterprise a very rich reward.”

By the next day he changed his tune a bit, however. His lead on a June 18 story said: “There can no longer be any doubt of the existence of gold in this region.” He noted that excitement grew apace and that camp had already been established before soldiers lined the creek, digging mud with bare hands in some cases. Even some of the officers panned out a little gold.

Thereafter, the Jenney-Newton expedition stood up to its business. The geologists split the party into several. Jenney concentrated on gold, Newton on general geology. MacMillan saw nothing unusual in the procedure, especially when Jenney moved northward toward Spring, Rapid and Box Elder Creeks, miners following him in case he should find something. But Davenport read sinister meanings into Jenney's junkets. Scornfully, he said Jenney sought to make a mystery of what was obvious to everyone, to make himself the only person who would have “the sole privilege of causing the Black Hills to contain gold or the contrary. . . .”

Describing him as one who spouted textbooks memorized as an undergraduate, Davenport said Jenney's judgment of gold “is of as little weight in the minds of old and case hardened miners as a feather in the balance.” He also implied that Jenney sought secretly to line his own pocket by working in seclusion.

Under such headlines as GOLDEN SAND, GOLD GALORE, and PAY DIRT, MacMillan's reports ran from one to five columns. Never once did he lose faith in the unbounded richness of the field. After the arrival at French Creek he reported abundant confirmation of gold by geologists, engineers, soldiers and miners. All, he said, had been apprenticed to pick, shovel, pail and gold pan. He enthusiastically assured his readers that the French Creek diggings were at least twenty-five to thirty miles long, in a gulch ranging from one-half to one and one-half miles wide.

However, MacMillan did duly report Jenney's reservations about the French Creek diggings. Jenney's tests of prospect holes caused him to value the take at not more than 1½¢ per pan.

By mid-July Jenney had returned from Spring Creek, having found rich deposits that would yield from 3 to 3½¢ a pan. MacMillan quoted him as having told an old miner that amount “would send a man to Congress in a very short time.”

Without fail, MacMillan's stories showed the Black Hills to be nothing but a golden mecca. To make it easier for those searching for the wealth of their dreams, he carefully outlined the various routes into the Black Hills and reported with great seriousness that miners had found a cut-off that would save two days on the route from Fort Laramie.

By late July the systematic sampling by Jenney's parties had outlined a fairly large gold-bearing area, and MacMillan again used the telegraph. On July 25 he wrote that gold had been discovered in Jenney's Gulch on Spring Creek and along Rapid, Castle and Burntwood Creeks. One prospect hole on Spring Creek alone, he said, yielded $35 to $40. Something of electric excitement rang through his copy as he reported the discovery of Mammoth Ledge, a quartz bed.

Not content with second-hand information, MacMillan rode to Jenney's Gulch and saw for himself. To back up his stories he bought $1.90 worth of gold and enclosed it in a twelve-page story to Nixon. When Nixon ran the story he preceded it with this editor's note:

“[With this letter were transmitted to the editor some splendid specimens of nugget gold taken from the Spring Creek diggings.—Ed.]”

Having ridden about the country, MacMillan acknowledged the difficulty a reporter faced on such a story. “In a new gold country, where discovery is the order of the day, and where no story is too incredible for belief, it is only with great labor, that the facts in the case can be obtained. . . . ”

Davenport was much more wary. Constantly emphasizing the gold yield as of low value, he reported that “too much sweat of the brow” had discouraged the once-elated soldiers. Nor did he think the quartz beds showed signs of metallic richness, conceding nevertheless that such deposits had yielded gold in Arizona and elsewhere. As a matter of fact, he wrote of geology with considerable self-assurance throughout.

WHERE MacMillan sailed on gold-filled clouds, Davenport plodded earth on this track: If the Black Hills were to provide a livelihood for white men, it would be by farming and grazing, not by mining.

Besides writing of gold, MacMillan and Davenport had yet another story to tell—geographic description. Only a few explorers had poked into the region, leaving the public still hungry for word of the western lands. Generally, the reporters wrote long, detailed descriptions of the country. Especially when they entered the forested beauty of the Black Hills they became almost lyrical, Davenport writing that they were “at the entrance of the Indian Eden—a land of flowers, fruit, honey, gold and precious stones. . . .” They spoke of fine grazing lands, quaking aspen, juniper, strawberries, juneberries, lots of game, streams full of fish, springs, healthful climate. Both pictured the Hills as a miniature Scotland.

They also reported a gold rush in its incipient stage. Here their reporting was weakest.

Even as early as Fort Laramie, MacMillan reflected the gold rush in motion. He said reports from Sioux City, Yankton and other points on the upper Missouri had 300 to 1,500 miners en route to the Black Hills, adding: “It is impossible, away from the seat and center of this excitement, to estimate its strength. Its effects ramify to almost every class of people. . . . In short, it seems a foregone conclusion that miners will penetrate the hills despite the most rigid surveillance that the War Department may exercise over the contested territory.”

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Their stories upon arrival at Camp Harney told in detail of how the troops surprised the first handful of prospectors, who took to the timber at the sight of uniforms. By late June, MacMillan said 100 to 120 miners were believed to be in the Hills, but by mid-July—by which time the stories of the first gold finds had been in the papers—he estimated 800 to 1,000. Davenport put the figure at 600, but said four times that many were along the railroad and the rivers either moving toward the Black Hills or waiting for word that it would be safe to go.

"The unconscionable exaggeration of the richness of the placer diggings here," Davenport wrote, "is due to the untrained imaginations of uneducated and vulgar men, who have become intoxicated [at the] mere sight of a few grains of metal to whose brilliancy their poverty-stricken lives have, for the most part, been strange."

MacMillan said French Creek resembled more an active rural community in Illinois than a country as yet unopened. It was not at all unusual to meet 50 or even 125 new miners coming in. But he found it impossible to keep anything like an accurate census because the goldseekers disappeared into the recesses of the hills.

Even though the first reports had been exaggerated, said Davenport, "That peculiar frenzy inspired by the dazzling effect of the yellow metal on the heated imagination is an epidemic from which few of the most sensible minds are exempt." The result, in part, was this:

"Rude and ragged-looking miners' camps are scattered along Spring Creek and the southern branch. The occupants appear to exist in the veriest poverty. A frail shelter of decayed and torn canvas often is their only abode; many of them sleep under their wagons, others within them and many with no covering whatever. It is a puzzle to account for the persistency that leads such men to remain in a country that gives them so little promise of alleviation of their poverty. Many men who rushed over to Spring Creek during the excitement have already returned to Custer's Gulch. . . ."

Before both men were examples of writing from mining camps farther west. But seldom did either make any effort at the sort of writing that would bring out local color and individual characters. True, they did on occasion write of and describe the miners, complete with dialect, but their images were short and blurred.

REGARDLESS of human interest, the activities of the miners made news enough, especially when General George Crook arrived in late July and ordered the miners to leave by August 15. But Crook, having known miners in Idaho and Arizona, understood their problem. Sympathetically he suggested they meet at Camp Harney on August 10 to organize and devise rules that would secure to each man his claim should the Black Hills finally be opened.

To get his story of Crook's proclamation on the wire, MacMillan rode to Spring Creek and hired a courier for $15, paying him with an order on the Fort Laramie post trader. He said the *Herald* paid $200 for a courier. Couriers frequently charged the larger amount for a trip through Indian country, whether with government or newspaper dispatches. Incidentally, Davenport wasn't well liked. Both stories appeared in the editions of August 4, MacMillan reporting the miners in harmony with Crook's proclamation and some already en route home.

A visitor almost as distinguished as Crook soon appeared—Spotted Tail, a friendly Sioux chief. Earlier, the camp had been visited by members of a government commission appointed to buy the Black Hills if the Sioux would sell, but their visit made little impression. Spotted Tail was different.

Indeed, the Spotted Tail visit furnished one of the more unusual stories from the frontier. Davenport interviewed him, but with a flair. He engaged Louis Bordeaux who interpreted for a large fee. Davenport asked the questions, Bordeaux interpreted question and answer, and someone—either Bordeaux or another half-breed—wrote the answers in Sioux and English. When Davenport put his story together, he presented the interview in question-and-answer form, giving the answer both in English and in something that passed for Sioux or Siouian phonetics tortured into English syllables. His story filled almost all of page three, the *Herald's* first news page, assisted by a map of the Black Hills gold field, four columns wide and almost half a page deep. In later years Davenport said he believed that was the first time anything of the sort had been done. He acknowledged it as a stunt, simply "to furnish the pale-face readers of the journal with a linguistic curiosity."

As both reporters began telling of the exodus of miners early in August, a heaviness of heart pervaded MacMillan's copy, along with some defensiveness about the accuracy with which he had reported the gold. And a supercilious note sounded in Davenport's. Both predicted every one of the miners—Davenport estimated 2,000 were then in the Hills—would simply comply with Crook's proclamation, but they gave different reasons.

MacMillan showed respect, sympathy and compassion for the miners whom he depicted as responsible men leaving because their government told them to go. But he predicted seven-eighths would be back in the spring, having cached their tools for the winter.

Yes, the exodus had begun, Davenport said, but the promptness of the miners' compliance was not so wonderful as it might seem. "It simply confirms my former statement that many of them are bitterly disappointed in their fondly dreamed of Eldorado." Most, he said, had few necessities left to their name, improvidence being characteristic of them. Barely one in 100 would take back enough gold to prove where he had been.

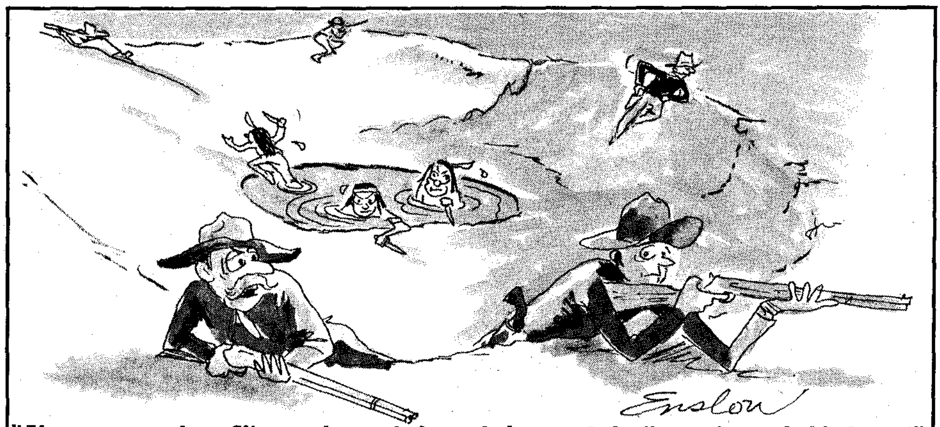
FROM CAMP CROOK on Rapid Creek they rode over to the former site of Camp Harney, by then called Custer City, for the miners' meeting of August 10. The thing that impressed MacMillan most on the ride was passing through a gulch, deserted now but two weeks earlier "busy with miners and dotted with mining camps."

They found a transformation at Custer City. Two log houses had been built, plots measured, thoroughfares laid out. One of the buildings was known as the store, which Davenport thought "a bitter sarcasm" since it was empty, and the other as City Hall, which he thought looked like a barn. Three hundred tents housed about 600 men.

Of that number, if accurate, only 150 attended the peaceful meeting in City Hall where the miners adopted a resolution saying they obeyed the orders of the President only under protest and commending Crook and Jenney for their gentlemanly conduct. "They swear by the *Inter Ocean*—the miners do," MacMillan wrote in his journal. Some confirmation of his claim can be found in the miners' resolution itself, which directed that copies of the resolution be sent to the *Inter Ocean* and to the Cheyenne *Leader* for publication.

The Black Hills story was over for the season, but a powerful lot of traveling remained. Indeed, the expedition was to remain in the field for slightly better than two months longer. At first, they cut westward through the Hills and by late August were near Inyan Kara, an eminence in eastern Wyoming.

There on August 31 a courier arrived from Fort Laramie with a telegram for Davenport. It was an order from James



"Always remember, Slim, make a circle and them red devils can't get behind you!"

Gordon Bennett Jr. telling him to proceed to Red Cloud Agency in Nebraska and report the council between the Black Hills Commissioners and the Sioux.

Just such an order had sent Stanley to find Livingstone. As Davenport told the story many years after: "The discipline of the 'Herald' forces in those days was much like that of a military body. When an order was received the recipient obeyed it as quickly as possible, without hesitancy or discussion. Devotion and loyalty to his journal were paramount to all else, family, friends, personal safety or material interest."

Besides, Davenport the young reporter had before him all the exploits of older *Herald* men who overcame formidable obstacles to get the story. And he was determined to do the same. He was in the wilderness. Fort Laramie lay to the south. His destination lay to the southeast, separated from him by the Black Hills and a large chunk of Sioux reservation. "I had hardly read the telegram a second time when the thing to do had outlined itself in my mind. I can now put it only to the credit of a rashness due to a woeful lack of knowledge."

What he decided to do was to set out through the Black Hills all by himself.

He was 250 miles away from Red Cloud Agency, but a small military camp had been left at Custer City, seventy to ninety miles distant. He decided to strike out for that camp and trust to luck the rest of the way. Pride kept him, who had been ribbed as a tenderfoot, from asking Dodge for an escort.

Riding a rawboned horse and leading an Indian pony on which he had packed his scanty outfit, he set out. His ride was not exactly trackless, though, for he could follow Custer's old trail. Still it was a potentially dangerous thing for a man alone to do, especially one not seasoned to the frontier.

He pushed his animal hard that first day, camped with due secretiveness, made a meal of coffee boiled in a tin cup, bacon pulled from saddle bags, and hard bread. He sweetened the coffee with brown sugar stirred with a knife. But his rest was disturbed by visions of wild animals and a non-visionary toothache. Before dawn he broke camp. About the middle of the second day he reached the Army camp. Fortunately, a party of four men was about to leave for Red Cloud Agency, and he rode with them for the rest of the journey.

MacMillan would appear to have remained with the expedition. His last story, written from near Inyan Kara in late August, appeared in late September, but there was no final summary story of the expedition which returned to Fort Laramie in mid-October.

Although most of the miners had left the Hills, their departure marked only a hiatus. By the next summer the gold rush was in full swing again because Grant quietly issued orders that the Army should not stop it. From then on the Black Hills gold rush ran its course, fanned in part by the reporting of MacMillan and Davenport.—*Reprinted from Winter, 1961 JOURNALISM QUARTERLY.*

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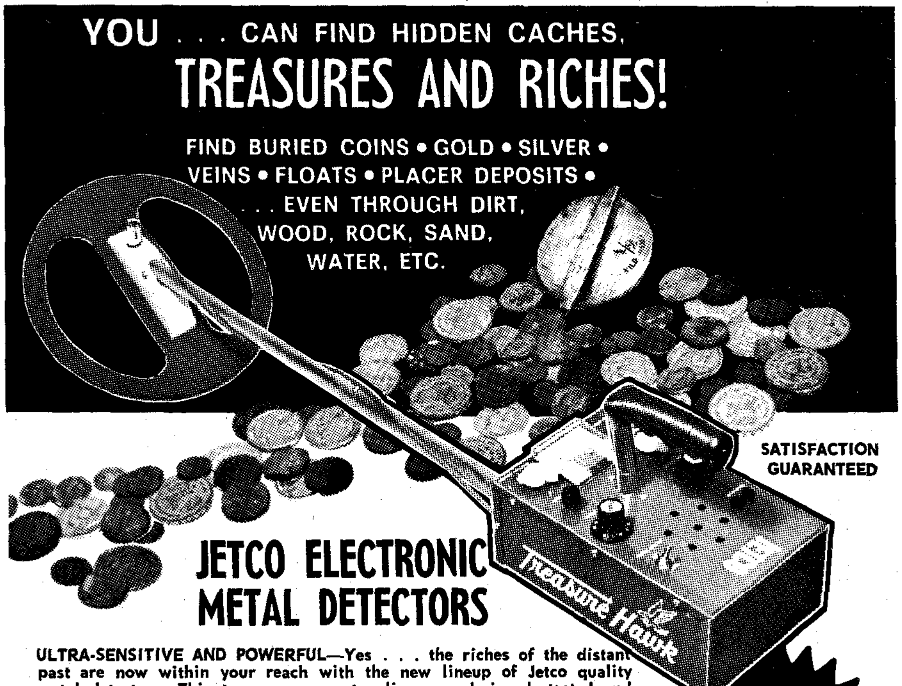

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Kingston Roared Like a Lion

(Continued from page 6)

and replaced by a service station.

The late Governor George Curry of New Mexico had his summer home in Kingston and Jack Graves and his mother later lived in this neat white cottage. Graves was president of the famous Spit and Whittle Club organized early in the beginning of the town. (Anyone who thinks he's a super "spitter" has but to challenge any member of this unusual club and he's got himself a match. It is only proper, however, to warn the challenger that a member of the club already has set a record of thirteen feet and eleven inches. That, you have to admit, is quite a "spit.")

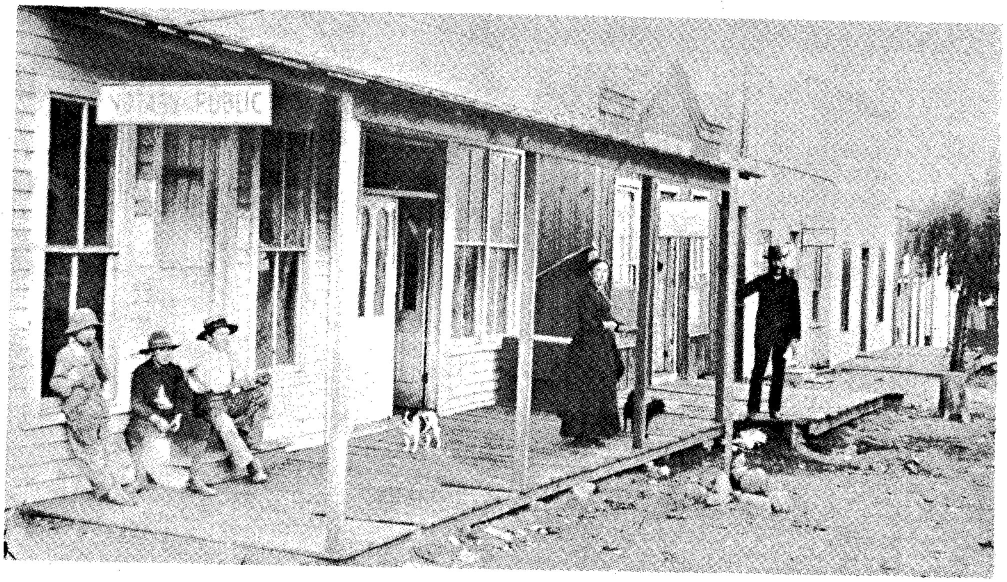
Mrs. Blanche Nowlin, who today makes her home in Lake Valley, grew up in Kingston. Her father, Oliver Wilson, and his partner built the Victorio Hotel. Mrs. Nowlin remembers her childhood fascination with the women on "Virtuous Street," an avenue that circled the foothills behind the stores, banks, and saloons on Main Street. The women were a source of exciting mystery. She was told that they were "bad," and she must never, never speak to them. But she was so curious about the ladies that when her mother sent her on errands to Main Street, she always tried to catch a glimpse of them. Often they could be seen horseback riding with very attractive male companions. They rode the best horses the livery stable had to rent and dressed in the most beautiful and fashionable velvet riding habits with marvelous hats whose plumes waved in the breeze. They wore shiny black boots and often their hands were encased in handsome gauntlets. What puzzled little Blanche was the fact that these "bad" women had everything gay and glamorous, while her mother (who was certainly a good woman) had no fine clothes, no time to go horseback riding, nor did she have a beautiful complexion or carmined lips. It just didn't make sense!

Mrs. Nowlin smiles as she recalls that when her father, just arrived in the States from Sweden, applied for a job in the mines, he told the bookkeeper his name was Oliver Olson. "No," said the bookkeeper, "you're not Olson, we've got too many of them on our list already. You are *Wilson.*" And till this day the Olson family is known as Wilson. Mrs. Nowlin's brother was one of the best-known ranchers around Lake Valley.

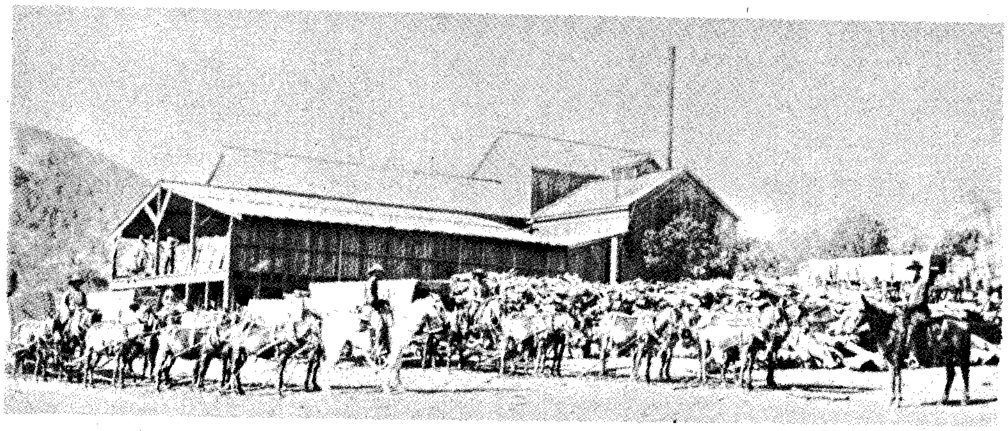
A FEW MILES out of Kingston, Toppy Johnson had his slaughterhouse. He did a flourishing business furnishing meat to grocery stores, restaurants, and hotels in town. People said that Toppy was not too particular about the origin of the beef he bought. It was rumored that most of the beeves that found their way into Toppy's slaughter pens were stolen. The fact that Toppy and his gang packed six-guns and were quick to use them discouraged snoopers around the slaughterhouse. Anyway, the people of Kingston had to have their beef.

One of the most popular saloons on Main Street was the Long Branch, but

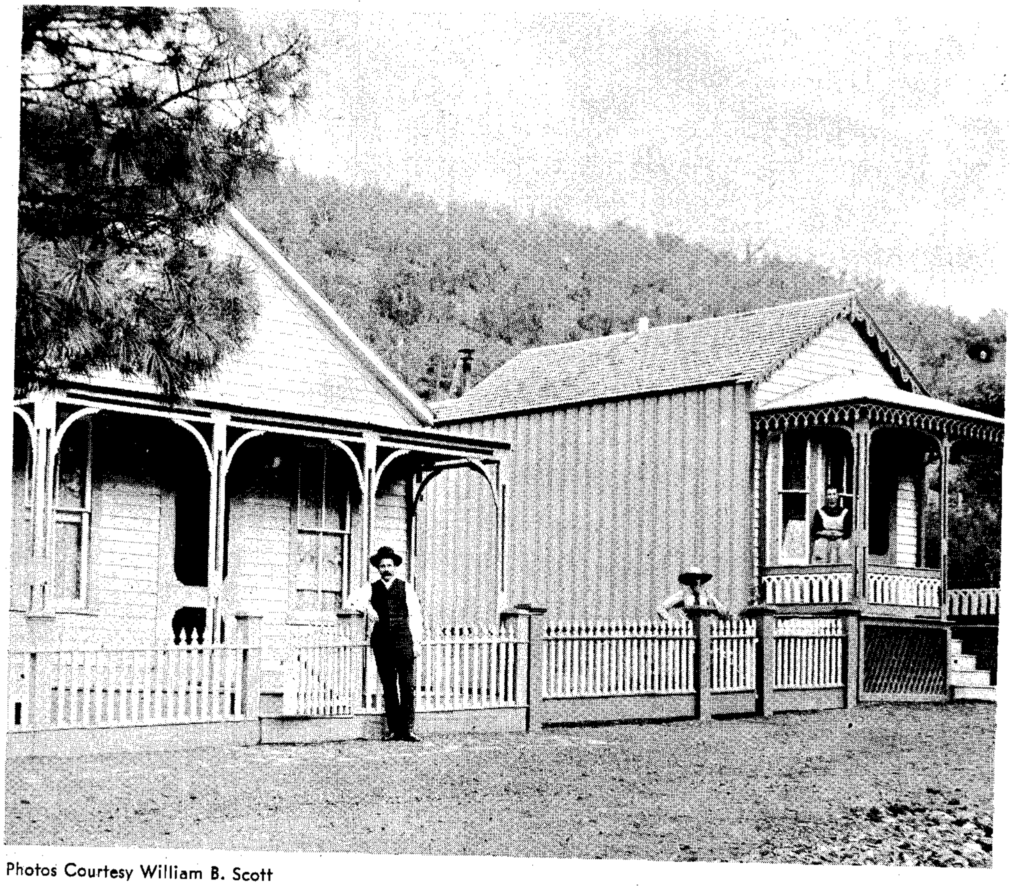
(Continued on page 58)



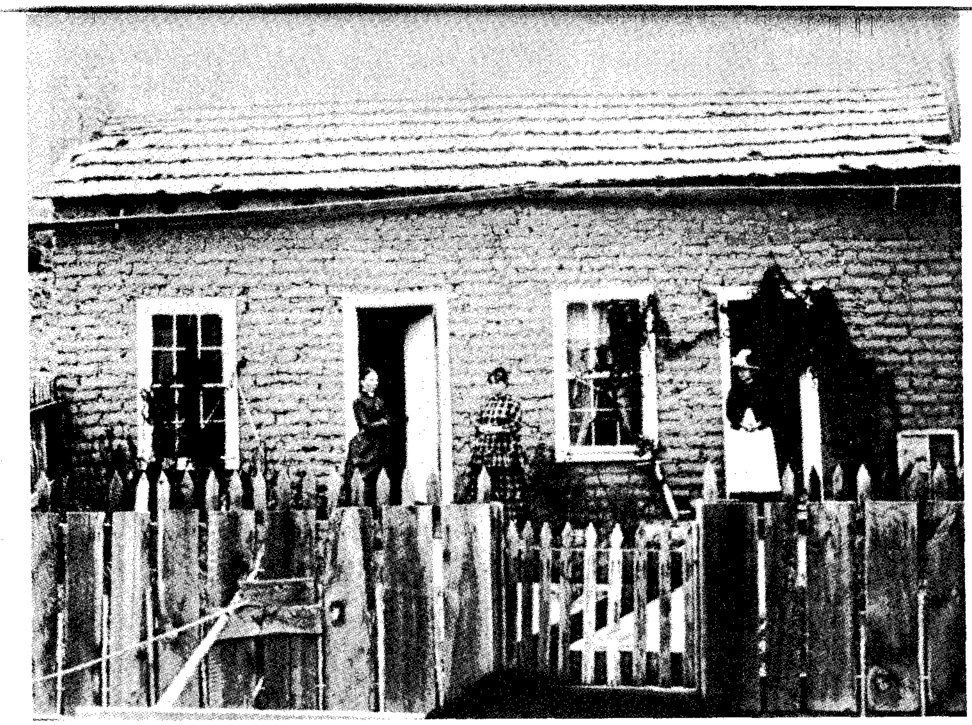
Justice of the Peace, grocery store (open door), bath house, and clothing shop line Kingston's main street.



Ore smelter believed to be in Hillsboro. Below, decoratively adorned homes in Kingston.



Photos Courtesy William B. Scott



Adobe home in Hillsboro.

THE PERCHA BANK

Percha Bank above still stands in Kingston, but brick building at left is gone. Below, E. Walters & Co. store also in Kingston.

E. WALTERS & Co.

Hillsboro—Out of a Hat

(Continued from page 7)

boys were her sons, and thinking it would be safer for Homer if she claimed him along with her two, she said yes. That angered Victorio, who accused her of lying. He had the boy seized and stripped. Then, giving the terrified youth a start of fifty yards, the whole troop of savages raced after him with long willow switches. Homer managed to keep ahead for three miles. When they caught up with him they slashed him cruelly right to the edge of Hillsboro. The boy staggered on to faint in front of Perrault and Galles' store. He recovered, but neither he nor the local citizens ever forgot his ordeal.

Another time, 150 of the redskins ambushed and killed 18 of the hated "white-eyes" on the Clarence Wilson ranch near Hillsboro. The victims were buried in a single grave on the hill where they died.

Hillsboro's history sparkles with famous names, colorful personalities, notorious badmen: A. B. Fall, who later rose to national prominence; Edward L. Doheny, multimillionaire who never forgot the friends of his young, poor-miner days; and Frank W. Parker, noted judge. Eugene Manlove Rhodes rode the Hillsboro mountains and canyons for years, using them for local color in his *Stepsons of Light.* Mark Twain used the locale for his *Roughing It.* George Curry, territorial governor of New Mexico, was erroneously reported dead in Hillsboro.

Sadie Orchard, only woman stage driver in New Mexico, was a well-remembered personality of the town. She and her husband operated the line between Hillsboro, Kingston and Lake Valley and she made the run every day. During the Oliver M. Lee trial, Sadie freely expressed her opinions in salty language on the streets. She was a friend of glamorous Lillian Russell, and rumor asserted that Sadie was the reason for Lillian's bringing her stage troupe to Kingston. Sadie boasted that her line never had been held up, even though the stretch of Percha Canyon road between Hillsboro and Kingston was "always troublesome for us stage drivers; Indians lurked along the way and the road was surely trying."

THE LAST FEW years have taken a great toll among my friends who were part of the early days in Hillsboro. One of them, the late Reverend Henry Van Valkenburgh, was sent at age nineteen by the Methodist Church to this wild mountain district. The tenderfoot preacher was told scary tales about the country from the moment he got off the train at Engle, but he went on undaunted. He was described as "a little man, wears a hat bigger than his body."

When Van Valkenburgh left Hillsboro after five weeks of evangelistic preaching he "had such good luck that the town really was cleaned up. The public dances closed, no musicians and no dancers to play for." At night he held street services out under the moon and stars. One man, Brother Clark, had the courage to

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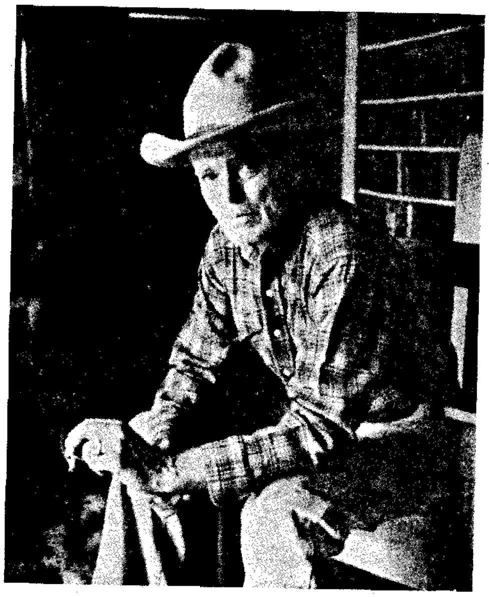
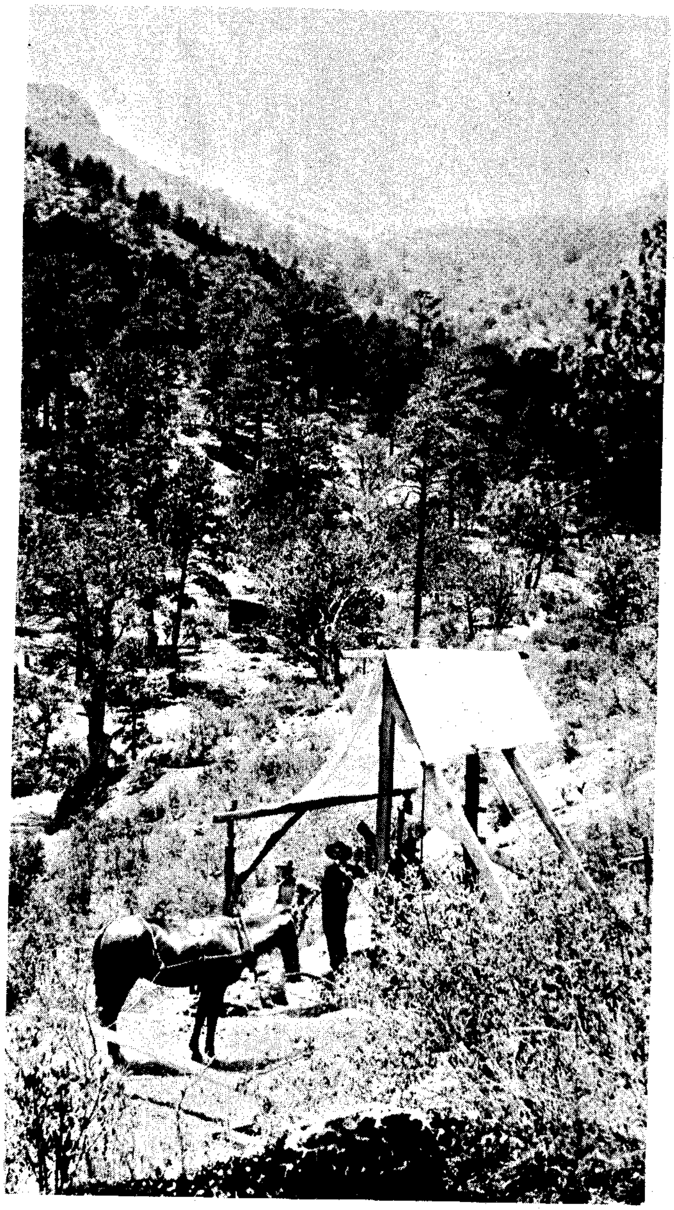


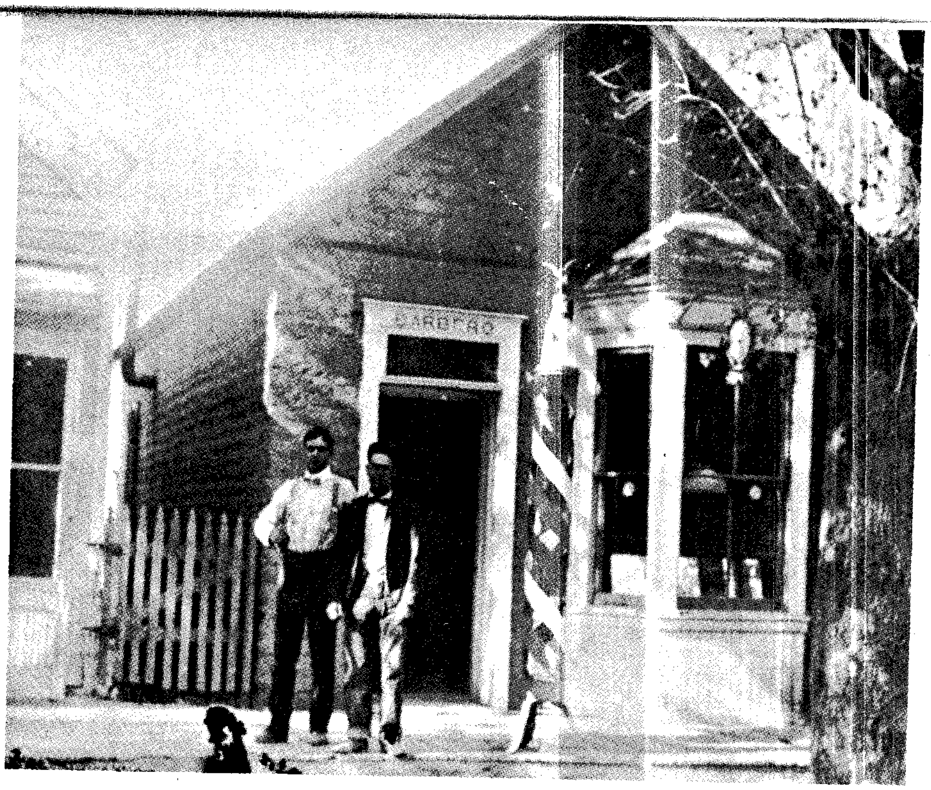
Courtesy William B. Scott

William E. Johnson, local Indian scout, Rough Rider, and mining engineer.

Mining operations in canyon west of Kingston.

Courtesy William B. Scott



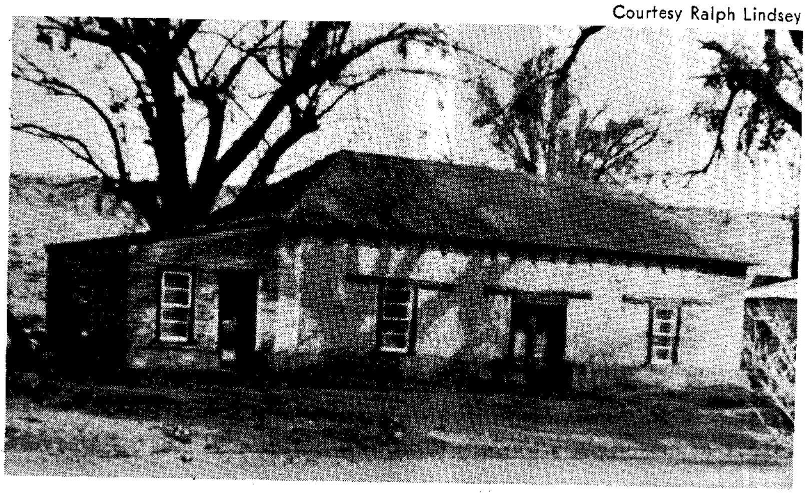


Courtesy William B. Scott

Barber shop believed to be in Hillsboro.

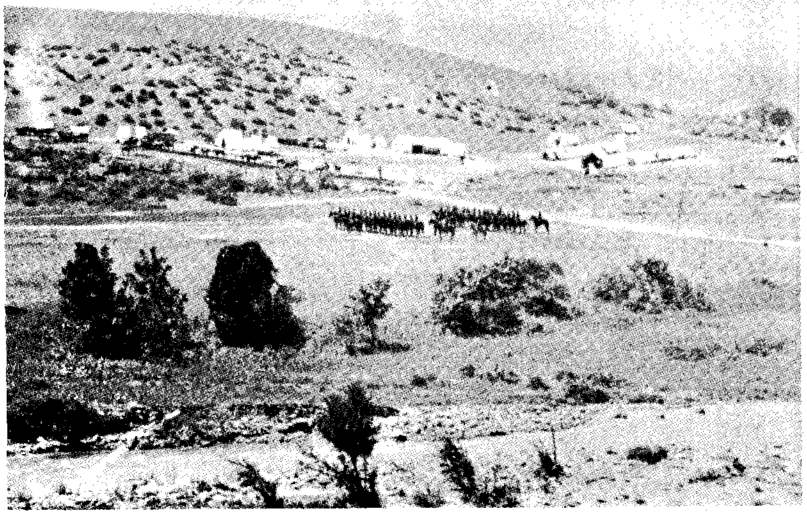
Hillsboro's first adobe structure now is a home.

Courtesy Ralph Lindsey



Ready for a ride!

Courtesy William B. Scott

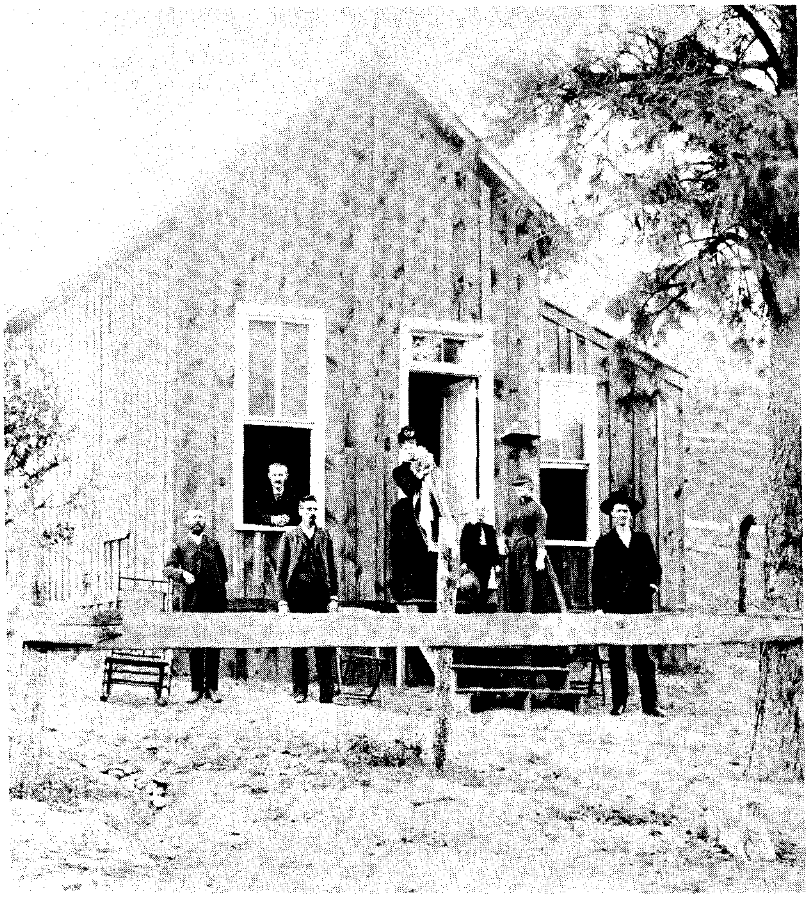


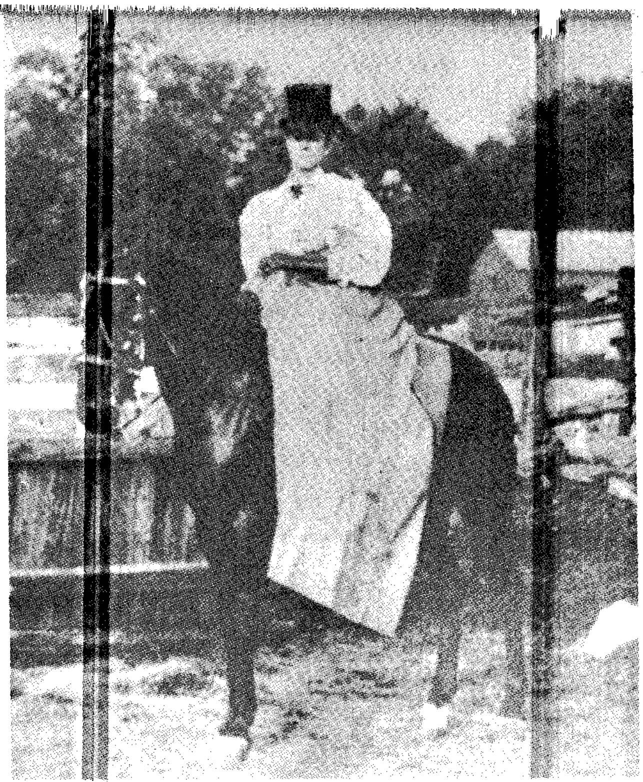
Courtesy William B. Scott

U. S. Army camp east of Hillsboro during Apache campaign.

Family dwelling in Kingston.

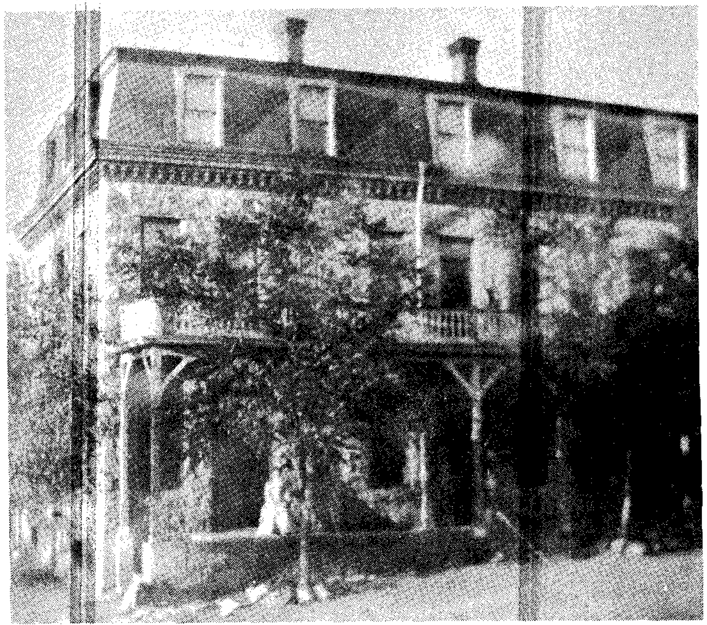
Courtesy William B. Scott





Courtesy Mrs. Lydia Key

Hillsboro's own Sadie Orchard, stageline owner and driver.

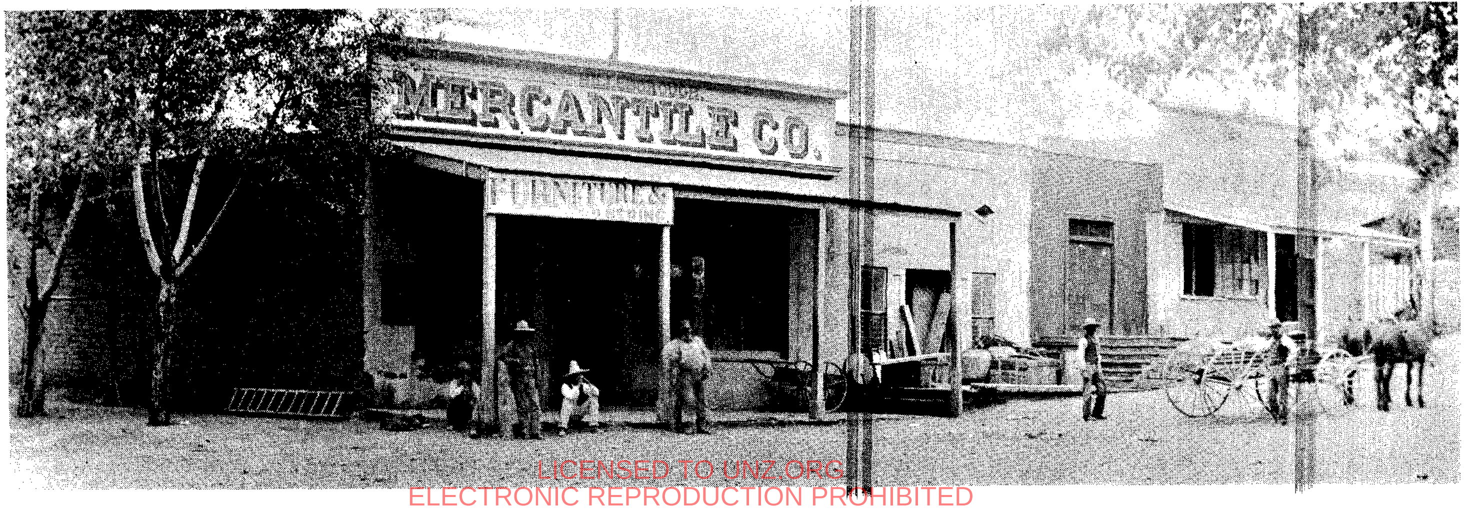


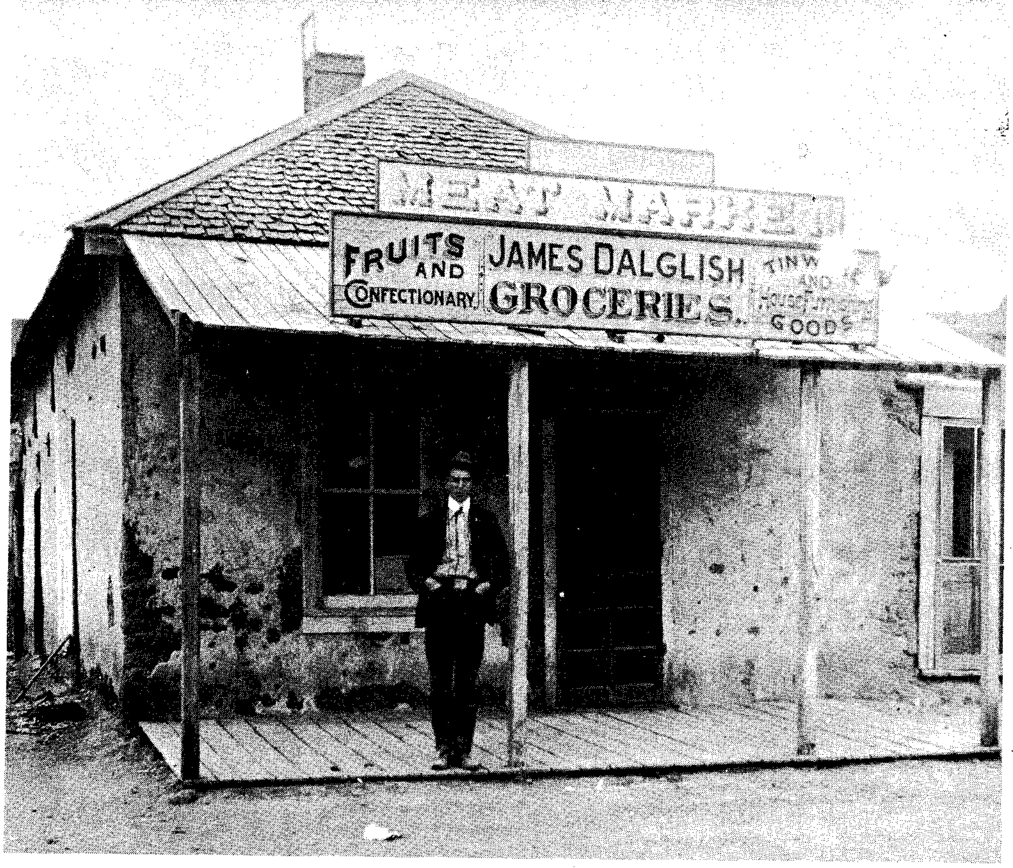
Courtesy Dean Bloodgood

Victorio Hotel, Kingston, begun in 1885 and named derisively for Apache chief, often sheltered townsfolk during raids.

Hillsboro street in 1890.

Courtesy William B. Scott




MEAT MARKET
FRUITS AND CONFECTIONARY
JAMES DALGLISH GROCERIES.
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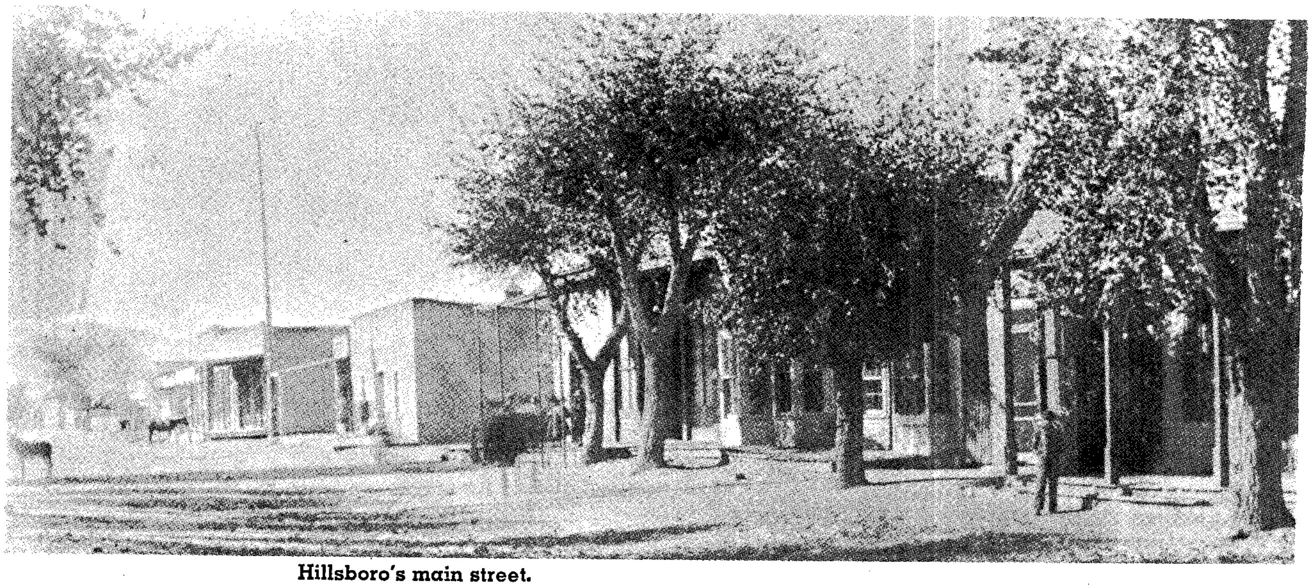
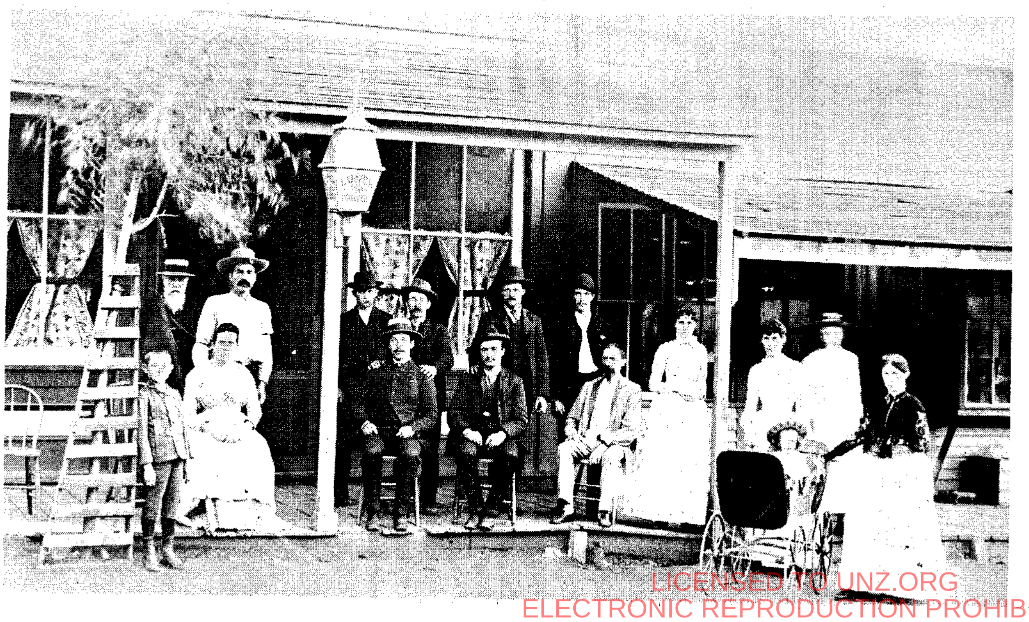
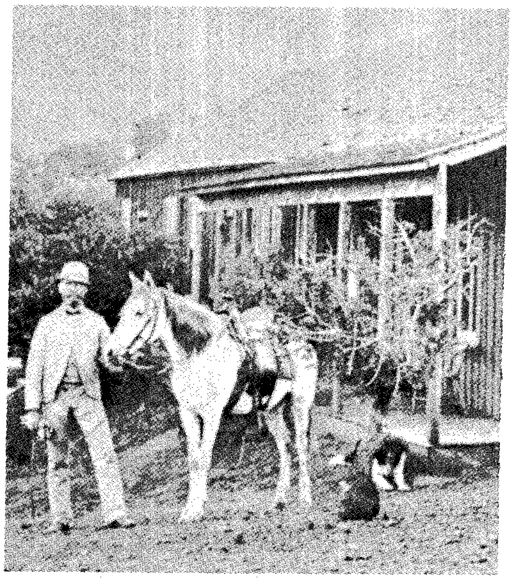
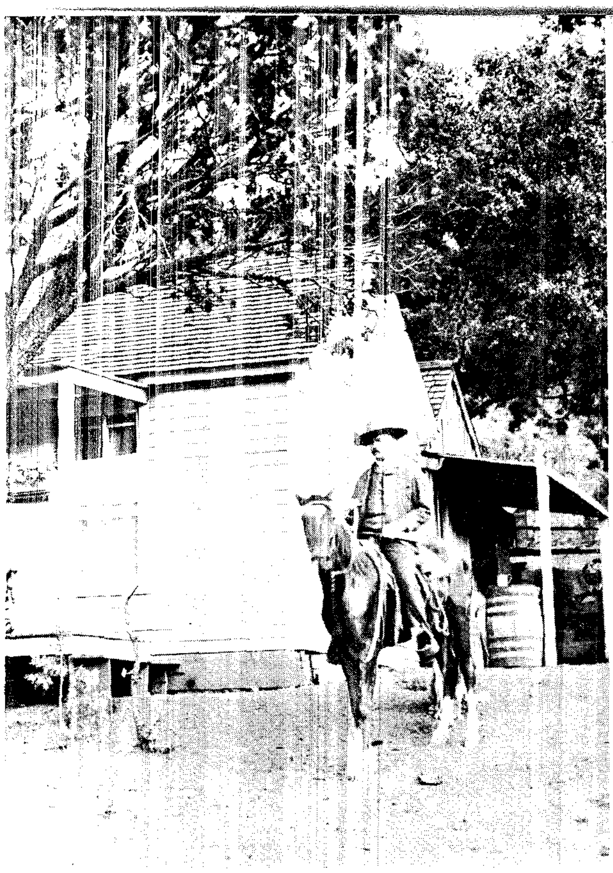


Hillsboro's main street.

Restaurant on Kingston's main street.

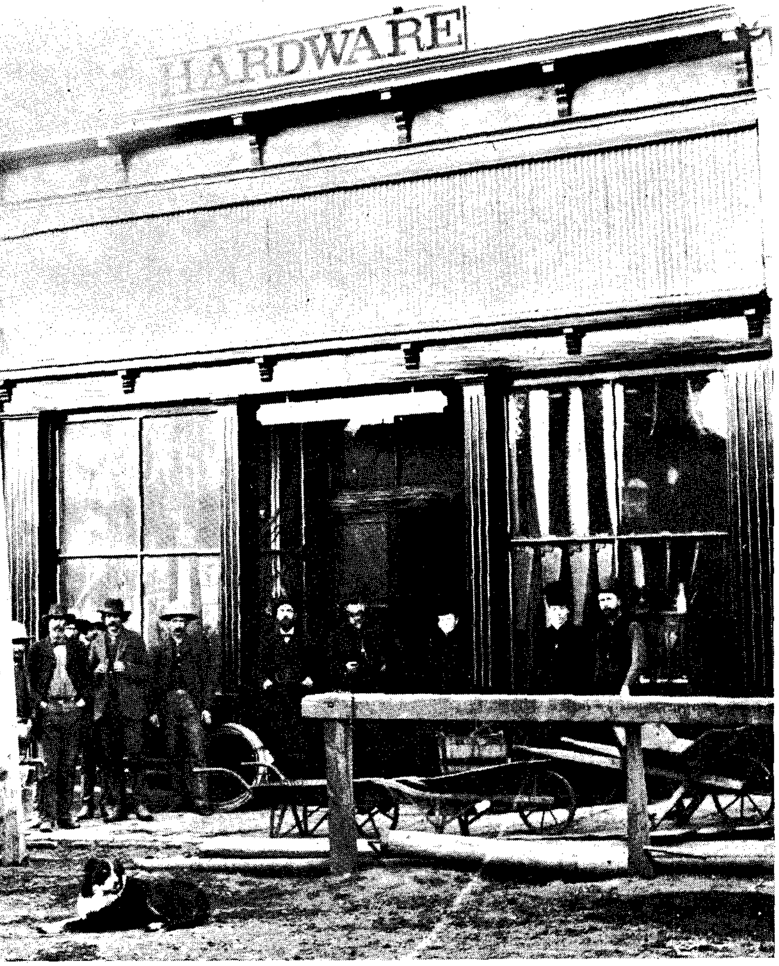




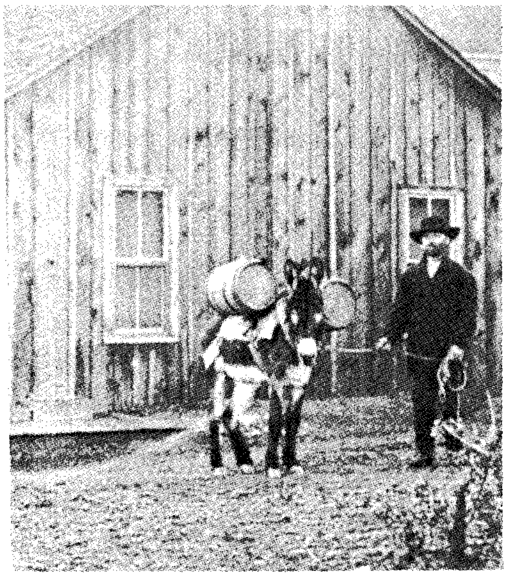


Photos Courtesy William B. Scott

Main street in Kingston. Kingston Masonic Lodge is above this old hardware store.



James Dalglish's general store in Hillsboro, top left. Above, a Kingston home in the 1880s.



Left, two Kingston men ready to hit the trail. Does the photo below, believed to be in Kingston, need any comment?

Kingston Roared Like a Lion

(Continued from page 52)

no one had ever heard of Marshal Matt Dillon! Some of the belles of the barrooms were Lousy Liz, Mina Lucy, Little Nell, Big Jeannie, and Big Annie. Each of the last two girls weighed more than 200 pounds and both were said to be "favorites."

Horse racing was one of the most popular early day sports. A few miles down the road to Hillsboro was a long, flat stretch of treeless land which made a fairly good race track. Many a dollar, gold nugget, and slug of silver changed hands at that frontier track.

Dean Bloodgood, whose parents located in Kingston in 1882, was probably the first Anglo child born in the town (July 30, 1884). He now makes his home in Austin, Texas, but he has many happy memories of his life in Kingston. He recalls one very exciting experience when he was but five years old. A rider came racing in to town warning that Geronimo was riding toward Kingston with a wild band of Apaches. The large bell on Main Street began to toll its warning. But Bloodgood's father and uncle, who hauled ore from Kingston to Lake Valley, the closest railroad, both were on their routes. Judge West, a friend of the family, came to the Bloodgood home and hurried the family into the basement of the Victorio Hotel, which was under construction. After the raid had been repulsed the town spent several hours getting back to normal. It took a lot of courage to live in those frontier times. The granddaughter of Judge West, Mrs. Ann Bucher, lives in El Paso, Texas, but also has a home in Hillsboro where she spends most of the summer of each year.

The late Mrs. Sam Bernard owned many interesting relics of historic Kingston and the Black Range in her home in Kingston. One was a file which was said to have been taken from under the arm of Billy the Kid the night Pat Garrett killed him. Another was an old razor which was claimed to be the one Geronimo had used to shave his beard before he was taken to Florida.

On a shady hill about a mile from Kingston is the town's cemetery. The boys in Kingston called it "Skull Hill," but today, with trees that have grown up over the hillside, it could pass as a picnic spot or quiet park if it were not for the scattered headstones. I paid a visit to the cemetery hoping to find Sheba Hirst's grave, which was supposed to be marked with a plain wooden cross with *Sheba* cut into the wood. Today, many of the graves are unmarked, and the one in which Sheba sleeps is among them. It seems a shame that a man who was known to America through Mark Twain's stories of Kingston should not have a permanent headstone.

Even today visitors can find many evidences of the wealth which the town enjoyed in those colorful days of the 1880s. The stone walls of the Victorio Hotel have been torn down to the main floor, and tall grass covers the inside of the once-busy lobby. Other foundations are scattered on what once were well-trodden streets. The town grew up on both sides of the Middle Percha, some of the houses high up the mountain overlooking the clear waters of the river. Some very nice looking houses are there today. On the highway, which was Main Street in the boom days, are several comfortable, attractive homes. Many families from El Paso, Texas, and nearby large New Mexico cities make their homes in Kingston all during the summer months. Others, most of them retired people, live in the town the year around.

THERE ARE rumors in the Black Range country that some of the previously good, producing mines of the Kingston area will be reactivated. A young man who, with his wife and two sons, lives in a comfortable house trailer near the Black Range Hotel is very optimistic regarding the future of Kingston. He and a group of friends either have leased or bought the Lady Franklin group of mines and plan to commence work on the project in the near future. Who knows but that he will bring in another bonanza?

One of the really big attractions of the summer Black Range activity is the three-day "open house" staged by the Black Range Artists in the Percha Bank Building. The beautiful scenery, so different at the various seasons of the year, is always a challenge to an artist.

The Percha Bank Building is located on Main Street and is as sturdy today as it was the day the builders finished, away back in the early eighties. If the visitor is lucky enough to visit Kingston during this artistic display of pictures, he will be treated to viewing some very good paintings. Entire walls of the large rooms are covered with a wide variety of portraits, still life, and scenery.

Visitors will be intrigued with the massive door of the huge, empty vault. It is painted black and bordered on top, sides, and bottom with colorful flowers and green leaves. Inside this border are several scroll-like drawings. The colors are as vivid today as they were the day the brush of an unknown but very fine artist painted them. This door always hangs ajar because no key or combination is known to any of the people living in the Black Range district. Looking into the yawning mouth of the immense vault, the visitor, if he has imagination, will stand and wonder how many millions in silver and gold this vault once held.

Across the street from the bank, swinging between two stout posts, is the town bell with the figures 1882, the date the town was incorporated, etched on the side. In pioneer days the bell tolled to inform the townspeople that mail was in or the stagecoach had arrived. It also tolled to warn of impending Indian raids.

To reach Kingston, the traveler turns off Highway 85 (Interstate 25) a short distance above Caballo Dam, which is between Las Cruces, New Mexico, and Truth Or Consequences, New Mexico. This left turn puts the traveler on Highway 90, which eventually leads to Silver City. The road is smooth, fast. The first stop on 90 will be the picture-book town of Hillsboro with its magnificent walnut and cottonwood trees. Kingston is nine miles on up the road—and what a road it is! It follows, as it did in the old days, the wooded banks of Middle Percha, squeezed in between towering mountains of breathtaking beauty. Sheer canyon walls point hundreds of feet toward a bright blue sky dappled with fleecy, cotton-white clouds. The walls of the canyons are so colorful they put a rainbow to shame. Slide camera enthusiasts will stop their cars time after time to click the shutters to take pictures they will be proud to show back home.

The clear waters of the Percha ripple over colored rocks that line its shallow bed as it flows down to Hillsboro to irrigate fields, gardens, and orchards.

It is delightful country, a perfect vacation spot, a comfortable place to live. One of Kingston's earliest citizens came there to regain his health and because of the healthful climate lived thirty-one years in the town he loved so much. His name was Gage, and some wit called him "Narrow Gage" because of his slimness. The name stuck the rest of his life. He said of his adopted town:

"Men in the old days cherished good company, appreciated good yarns, enjoyed good tobacco. The only people in America who really are free, independent people who dare to own their own minds and say what they please and live as they wish to live are the people of Kingston."

Hillsboro—Out of a Hat

(Continued from page 53)

stand with him, and the two men sang. The people listened behind closed doors, but they heard and they got the word.

Another old-timer, Will McCall, past ninety when he died not long ago, was living at his ranch home near Radium Springs when I last visited him. He claimed to know for certain that a prominent citizen of the town got his start when his Mexican workmen uncovered a buried cache of gold coins while digging for a wall foundation. It was Will McCall's cousin, Jack, who killed Wild Bill Hickok. Mr. McCall admired the old gunmen, saying, "They was a fine bunch of fellers, all of them." Many of those "fine" fellows walked the streets of old Hillsboro.

As the county seat of Sierra County, Hillsboro was the site of some of the West's most sensational trials. Sierra County was created by an act of the 1884 legislature out of territory carved from Dona Ana, Grant, and Socorro Counties because miners in the region wanted their own.

They built a fine brick courthouse on a commanding hill and got ready for business. The first case tried was that of Kit Joy, an alleged train robber and murderer of Theophelus C. Webster, engineer of the evening express who had been willfully and deliberately shot and murdered near Gage station in Grant County. The one witness for the defense impressed the jurymen as being a liar, and they rendered a verdict of murder in the second degree and sentenced the prisoner to the penitentiary for life.

That was exciting, but the trial which rocked this part of the world so that the reverberations still are felt was that of

Oliver M. Lee and James Gilliland for the murder of Colonel Albert J. Fountain. The trial began May 25, 1899 and lasted eighteen trial days. Judge Frank W. Parker presided. Prosecution forces were headed by Thomas Benton Catron, and defense was directed by Albert Bacon Fall.

The most prominent lawyers of New Mexico were present, and the courtroom was packed with prospectors and miners, cowboys and cattlemen. Some seventy-five witnesses testified. Hotels in town couldn't handle the crowds, so the Territory sprouted a tent city at the north end, complete with cook and guards. The defense made camp at the south end and served Lee witnesses and friends from a chuckwagon.

A special telegraph line was run into town to take care of the daily reports filed by the many correspondents from AP, El Paso *Herald*, El Paso *Graphic*, and Hearst papers. Pat Garrett, sheriff of Dona Ana County; Captain Thomas Brannigan, and Major W. H. H. Llewellyn, known enemies of Lee, testified for the prosecution. Testimony revealed that Colonel Fountain and his little son, Henry, had disappeared on the road between Tularosa and Las Cruces. There was much talk of footprints, campfires, and trails. At the end however, Lee and Gilliland were adjudged not guilty and were freed. During the trial feeling had run high and hot, and some differences were settled in poker games around town in the evenings.

THE COURTHOUSE was a valuable and important part of Hillsboro life. Miners from the hills around came to record papers on their discoveries. In 1909 the legislature tried to move the county seat to Cutter, near Engle on the Santa Fe Railroad line. Hillsboro sent Edward D. Tittman, a fighting lawyer, to Washington. He was successful in having Congress annul the act of removal. In later years the county seat was moved to Hot Springs. Finally, the proud old brick building erected in 1892 for $20,000 was sold for $440 to A. J. (Pop) Howe of Hot Springs.

Other names which shared Hillsboro's days of glory were Little Corner Saloon, Tomlinson's place, and the Union Hotel and Bar. Tom Murphy's Parlour Saloon kept three shifts of bartenders busy selling only the best liquor. And Gold Pan Restaurant will be remembered by its scarred bench in front, studded with nails to protect it from the whittling of bearded prospectors and hardrock miners taking their ease.

Today those names are fond memories. Hillsboro is a quiet village of mostly retired folks enjoying the mountain climate, the friendliness and unhurried living, the sociability of card games and community picnics, delighting in showing visitors treasures of their museum, pitching in to support a yearly Bible camp for children. There is no exploitation of the history of the old mining camp, no rattling of skeletons for thrill-hungry tourists, just courteous hospitality to the truly interested visitor to the little town along the Percha. Angora goats and cattle graze the mountainsides; zinnias of startling size and burning colors fill the gardens. People still gather wild agarita berries for jelly, and Hillsboro goes serenely on.

Lola Montez—Man Breaker

(Continued from page 46)

performance of the dance despite his awareness that the publicity would only serve to continue packing the Jenny Lind and perpetuate the golden stream flowing into Lola's expansive handbag.

Yanking the gem-studded dagger from underneath her red garter, Lola tested its razor edge. Even her personal maid, accustomed to Lola's outbreaks of temperament, was frightened by this exhibition of uncontrolled fury. The worried servant was sent forthwith to Pat's office at the *Courier* with a command that he appear at Miss Montez's hotel immediately and apologize.

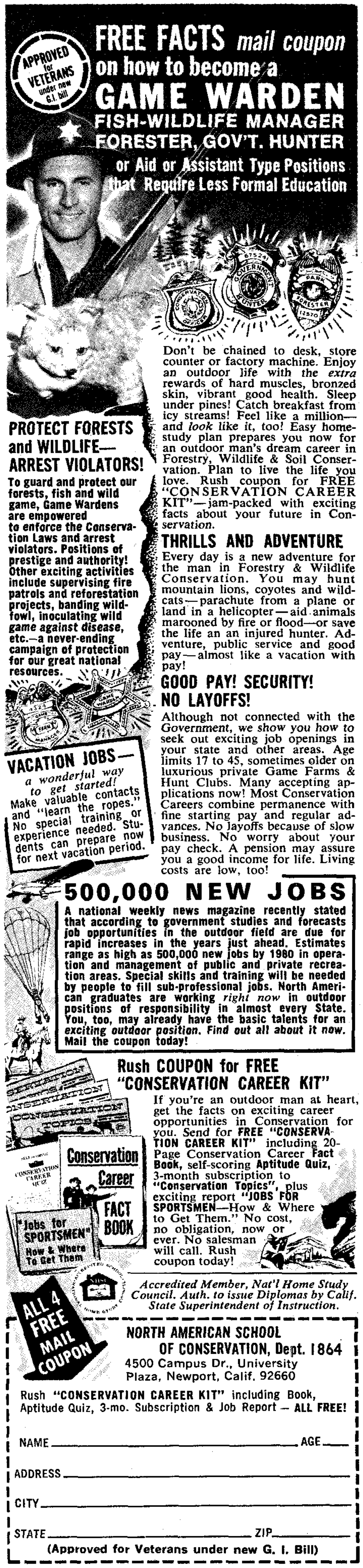
PAT HULL was not a man to dodge an issue. He appeared as commanded. Not wishing to see murder done, the maid remained away. Only two persons could vouch for what happened in the hotel—Pat Hull and Lola Montez. But neither ever gave a hint.

It had been one of those rare *hot* days in San Francisco. Pat had left his coat at the office and was in his shirt sleeves, his collar open at the throat, exposing a chest of muscle and short red hair. His side gun jutted out at just the right angle making for a quick draw. In frontier San Francisco one never knew what kind of rogue would pop out of an alley to denude a man of his poke. But as Pat cleared the stairway to Lola's room, he removed his gunbelt and wound it around the holster. At least here he had no need of arms. Especially firearms!

If Lola slashed at him as he entered her room, it is not shown. She might have and was capable of doing so. Her temper was something indescribable. Pat could have disarmed her easily without a scratch. It is possible that he did, being a man of experience in back-alley brawls and assassinations, once a daily sport of early San Francisco—before the vigilantes cleaned up the town. What actually happened is pure guesswork. Perhaps Lola Montez was overawed by an exhibition of rugged, animal masculinity. Anyway, when they appeared at the Bucket of Blood some hours later, they were as tame as fluffy kittens, fawning, and drinking champagne together.

There in the Bucket of Blood, Pat encountered his first challenge for Lola's charms. Another self-appointed lover whose identity is unknown promptly invited him to fight it out in the street. Pat didn't take him seriously until his antagonist dumped a pitcher of beer over his head. Naturally, Lola's cup of enjoyment overflowed.

Pat, with some reluctance, adjourned to the street. When the powdersmoke cleared away and a man lay quietly with a blue bullet hole in his forehead, victim of Lola's poison tarantula sting and Pat's wizardry with a side gun, she gave herself wholeheartedly to the winner. Although victorious, Pat Hull really had just lost the biggest fight of his life.



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Now he no longer ran critical reviews in the *Courier*. Rather, he was quickly on the defensive when men made lewd remarks about her performances at the Jenny Lind. He realized there was a limit to her engagement there, although pokes of dust were still being paid to see her. New gold strikes were taking place at Rich Bar, Whiskey Town, Dogtown (now Paradise), Magalia, Helltown and others along or near the Feather River up the Sacramento. Pat had an eye for Grass Valley even as other gold seekers.

Attendance began falling off at the Jenny Lind when prospectors drifted toward the new strikes, and Lola yielded to Pat's wishes that she quit the stage. They packed up a mule train, mounted saddle horses and set out for Grass Valley, stomping grounds for such renegades as Black Bart, Joaquin Murietta, Three-Fingered Jack and others of their ilk.

Pat and his intended bride spent a night at old Toll House at Rough and Ready, just four miles from Grass Valley. Now an antique shop, they left their mark at Toll House, where an admirer just down from the High Sierra presented Lola with a pair of half-tamed California brown bears. Lola was fascinated by the animals and to Pat's chagrin had the blacksmith across the road build a cage for them. Then she hired a freighter to pack the bears to Grass Valley. Pat's winning hand in the game of love was beginning to fall short an ace. They continued on to Grass Valley and were married in a plain ceremony—the bears, now Lola's constant companions, in attendance.

THEREAFTER Pat Hull put himself to work making his fortune, sometimes digging for gold, at times grubstaking others, while still contributing items to the *Courier*. Lola concerned herself with building a new house just out of town on Mill Street. She had her own fortune and asked Pat for nothing. In the rear of the house she built a supposed wine cellar; in reality it was a rock-lined den for her pet bears.

Pat was out appraising a gold mine when the house was completed and Lola moved in. At that time there were no visible masculine touches about the place. It was all Lola and as feminine as a female can get. Her name was baked into the table china and engraved on her silverware. All her booty from European conquests was stashed wherever space permitted.

Soon the goldfields of Grass Valley, Nevada City, Downieville, Auburn and countless others began to hear rumors of the wild parties Lola Montez was throwing in her new house on Mill Street. It was said you could have *anything* you wanted there for a price and that Lola was worth every ounce of dust she demanded. When Pat Hull also heard these rumors, his Irish temper went up to dizzy heights. As for Lola, she was so accustomed to men's attention she could not be content without it.

Pat brooded over the gossip. He even blamed himself for his absence from her, for having left her alone in a primitive mining camp. He dropped his work and headed for home.

Lola had her pet bears, all 800 pounds of them, tethered to a bronze post set in concrete at the front entrance of the house. They were well-trained by now—to her commands. When Pat arrived, seething with anger and hurt pride, they met him with ominous growls and a show of fangs that could tear a man to pieces. He backed off and tried the rear door. There a pair of mastiffs met him. With a heavy paling from the picket fence which surrounded the yard he beat off the snarling dogs and crashed inside the house. A guest was preparing to leave. Lola was shading her flushed cheeks with rouge and dusting powder. The man departed so rapidly that he left his hat and gold-knobbed cane, and never bothered with the front gate. He went right over the fence, slithered momentarily in the mud of Mill Street and kept running.

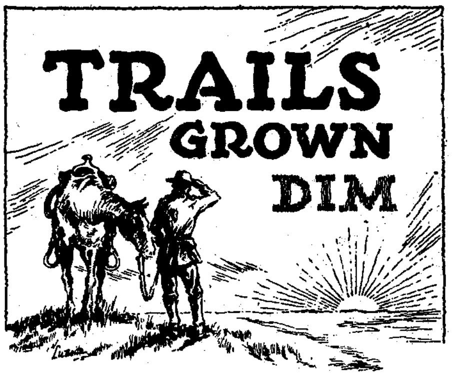
Hot words flowed between the newlyweds. Irish tempers flared and exploded like over-taxed safety valves. Furiously Lola dashed outside, untethered the bears, and literally goaded them into attacking her husband. In self-defense Pat drew his gun and killed the nearest with a single shot in the brain. If there had ever been a chance for reconciliation, it was gone now.

Lola loved her pets, some say even more than Pat Hull. He put a bullet in the backside of the other animal. It turned tail and returned to the front yard, roaring with pain. Lola then charged her husband. She laid his cheeks open with her long fingernails. Pat made no effort to defend himself from her attack and took a beating that few men would have accepted without returning the compliment. Fire in her eyes, threats of death coming from her throat, she announced flatly that she would never give up her men friends. She ranted about what a fool she had been for marrying such a tinhorn tramp. She, Lola Montez, who could have married kings, had fallen so low as to wed a printer's louse! Pat Hull must have reminded her she had fallen to the very bottom when the goldfields buzzed with sordid stories of her escapades.

Soon Lola was granted an uncontested divorce. Even in that she succeded in making a fool of him. But Pat Hull was a man. He took it. Lola went on to her reward. Dwindling fortunes sent her back to Europe. No kings or princes were waiting to marry her. Conditions had changed. And so had Lola. Pat learned that she had returned to America and had died in Brooklyn on January 17, 1861.

An extremely sensitive man who had deeply loved his wife despite her shortcomings, Pat Hull is believed to have brooded himself into an early grave. He survived Lola by only a few scant years. My efforts to locate his burial place have been unsuccessful. Lola Montez, however, is interred in Greenwood Cemetery in Brooklyn.

Grass Valley still has memories of this explosive pair of lovers—and battlers. Among its present population are many admirers of Lola Montez. A few resent the scandalous tales about her. Others simply chuckle, delighted by accounts of her antics.



If you have information concerning persons referred to below, do not write to us. Communicate directly with the letter writer.

White Elk—Baby McMeekin

I have tried for many years to find a person known as White Elk. He lived at the Thomas McMeekin home while attending grade school and high school in Butte, Montana and was known also as Baby McMeekin. He went to college at Kansas City, Kansas to become a doctor. He wanted to be a doctor in order to help his people and I would like to know how he came out in his desire to do this.—Mrs. Ray Kuster, Tekoa, Washington 99033

Lemuel Roye

My great-grandfather Lemuel Roye was born May 24, 1823 and died July 15, 1882. He came to Mississippi from Alabama after having married Harriet Anne Johnston. During the Civil War he served in Company I, 7th Mississippi Regiment. He had brothers named Henry Roye who settled in Palo Pinto County, Texas; Jake Roye who settled also in Texas, and Joe G. Roye who was in Company C, 1st Regiment, Mississippi Infantry during the Civil War and settled in Arkansas.

I would like to correspond with any descendants of the above and especially with anyone who might know the parents of Lemuel Roye.—Ralph L. Roye, Box 214, West Glacier, Montana 59936

Paramore Family

Thomas Paramore was an elder in the Presbyterian Church at Oxford, Ohio in the 1830s and moved on to Indiana near Greensburg where his brother David resided. They had married sisters by the name of McLain in Ohio. Another brother, James, settled with his mother at Eaton, Ohio and they were also members of the Presbyterian Church there. A Dr. Jesse Paramore, probably another brother, also lived there. There was also Ezekiel, the oldest brother, and William Paramore not accounted for. Any further information concerning this pioneer family in my mother's ancestry will be appreciated.—W. E. Bard, 11132 Pinocchio Drive, Dallas, Texas 75229

Kentucky Blains

Ancestors of the Blain family left Grayson County near Falls of Rough, Kentucky and went to Texas, settling in or around Bell County or Grayson County, Texas in or about 1850. They bought cattle and horses and drove them up north and traded them along the way. I am one of the few Blains left here and would like to hear from any of my relatives in Texas. I have a lot of pictures that the old Blains sent back to Kentucky to some of the old Blains here.—Ellen Blain Wilkerson, 2412 Helen Avenue, Louisville, Kentucky 40216

Cal John Chism

Does anyone have any information on one of my ancestors named Cal John Chism? I believe he came from Kentucky. My grandmother told me he had twenty-six notches on his gun and was quite a notorious character in the old West. I would appreciate any stories or information concerning him or any of his kin.—Mrs. James White, 834 South 35th Street, Omaha, Nebraska 68105

Marian Mixon

I am looking for information concerning a Marian Mixon who died in 1927 in Helena, Mississippi. Either he or his wife was a full-blood Cherokee Indian who participated in the "Trail of Tears." His wife's name is unknown but they had a daughter named Fannie who married a Mr. Bickle. Any information will be appreciated.—Bill Cowan, 1320 Hilltop, Belton, Texas 76513

William Kilpatrick Hargis

I am trying to learn something of my father's father, William Kilpatrick Hargis who was born in Mississippi April 5, 1818 and came to Texas in 1829. He fought as a civilian at the first battle for Texas independence at Gonzales and also fought in the Comanche Wars. I have tried for years to get some proof and knowledge and to get his grave marked as he is buried in the Old City Cemetery in Gonzales.—Mrs. Sam Isaacks, Box 72, Carlsbad, Texas 76934

Alec Grove Van Zant

I am looking for information on Alec Grove Van Zant. Probably born in the 1870s in Alabama, he married Mary "Mollie" Van Zant, a Cherokee woman and later moved to Mississippi and then to Oklahoma Territory. He may be a descendant of a buddy of Davy Crockett who married into the Creek Nation. Had a father born about 1838 still living in Alabama during the 1930s. Name of father unknown but is known to have lived past 101 years.—Rolling Thunder, Indian Camp, Imlay, Nevada 89418

Fern Garrison's Son

I am trying to locate my half-brother whose mother's maiden name was Fern Garrison. My father met her in Fort Chaffee, Arkansas just before or during World War II. My father's name was Virgil Brown, better known as V. A. To my knowledge they separated either in Fort Chaffee or Fort Benning before he was transferred to Germany. I have tried to locate this brother since my father passed away in April 1967. Any information regarding his residence or his mother's will be appreciated.—Thelma Brown Benoit, Box 37, Egan, Louisiana 70531

Gilbert Marshall

I am writing to inquire about my great-great-grandfather Gilbert Marshall as I wish to be clear on the issue of his gold mine. I am not seeking money. I just wish we knew where it was, if there was one, so that we could secure pictures of the area.

Gilbert Marshall was a blacksmith at Marengo, Iowa about 1868. He is said to have invented and patented the moldboard for the "Moline" plow. He moved his family to Wheeler County, Texas where he farmed and ranched. They then moved to Davis, Oklahoma.

About 1885, he gave each of his children, Thad, Hank, Charles, Frank, and Ida, $500 and an unknown sum to his wife and the family split up. Mrs. Marshall took Ida to Iowa for schooling but they returned to Davis and about 1889 Ida married widower James Ace McManus. Ida died in 1908 at Dunlap, Texas.

Thad and Hank went West as buffalo hide freighters and were massacred or murdered. Charles disappeared and Frank died in a sewer line cave-in at Fort Worth, Texas.

Gilbert Marshall went to California. In 1907 he returned to Oklahoma asking Ida and the family to go to California with him because he wanted to share his riches from his gold mine. They refused so he left, never to be heard of again. Many years later they learned he died naming no kin, so the estate went to California.

The family split was due in part to the temperament of Gilbert Marshall. He is remembered by my great-uncle as a mean, harsh-talking atheist. It is said that he was not good to his wife or children so that is why Ida and her family refused to have any part of his gold mine or California.

My great-uncle's last memory of Gilbert Marshall was, "He was an old, old man when he came for the visit. He had long white chin whiskers down to his waist and he was very proud of them. The last time I saw him he was astride an old mule. He and Grandpa McManus (James Younger McManus) used to have some of the awfullest arguments about the Bible I ever heard."

I would like to learn what exactly became of the sons of Gilbert as well as the old man himself. The family never did believe that Hank and Thad were massacred. They felt it was murder by someone who knew of the $500 each boy had.

This account is as accurate as can be pieced together at present. Were Thad and Hank murdered or massacred? What was Mrs. Marshall's name and who were her parents? Did any of the Marshall sons have families? Can anyone supply dates and places of births and deaths of Gilbert Marshall, his wife and sons? Did Gilbert really have a gold mine and if so, where? I would like to correspond with anyone having knowledge of Gilbert Marshall and will swap notes.—Mrs. Ben H. Helms, Route 2, Tecumseh, Oklahoma 74873

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Gunplay!

(Continued from page 21)

mons representing Bagsby, the court now witnessed the incredible speed of a skilled gunman.

Details of the demonstration are lacking, but one story has it that to emphasize his point, Newt called to Judge Mahon to take out his handkerchief. Before the judge could do so, Walker had drawn his pistol and clicked the hammer four times. When the defendant left the stand, the judge, jury and spectators were true believers.

FOR THE BALANCE of the day a succession of defense witnesses corroborated Newt's contention that Burton and Bagsby were the aggressors. Joe Gonzales, a miner and resident of Kernville, caused a sensation when he testified that two years earlier, in Bakersfield, Dave Burton offered him $200 to kill Walker. Charles Tibbet, also of Kernville, told of a conversation he had with Bagsby the previous March. Bagsby said that he was brought to the area by Burton for the express purpose of getting Newt Walker, and as he spoke he twirled a pistol on his finger.

After a three o'clock recess, the elder Walker was called to the stand. The old man's testimony corroborated his son's story in all particulars, and when he had finished, court was adjourned for the day.

Most of the next day, Saturday, June 17, was taken up by the special prosecutor, whom the *Californian* characterized as "actor-orator Sanders." "He has a pleasing manner, a ready flow of language and a happy gift of word painting," stated the newspaper, "but coupled with all these are the traits more ordinarily seen before the footlights than in front of a jury in a court of justice."

Every aspect of the case was acted out vividly by Sanders as he pictured the villainous Walker holding up the stagecoach, which in reality was never held up. According to Sanders, Walker, like a "leopard whelp who had tasted human blood," had been cheated of his game in the stagecoach incident and so had schemed to shoot down his enemies in cold blood that day in Havilah.

Ignoring the fact that Walker had surrendered of his own volition as soon as possible, Sanders bellowed and strutted before the jury box.

"Why did the murderer run away?" he raved. "Why, but for the same reason that Cain, when he felled his brother, hid himself in the hills of Nod, and for the same reason that every murderer from this first shedding of human blood by primeval man down to this day has felt his guilt upon him and run from the scene of the crime."

Sanders' oratory ran the gamut of emotions and the Burton women more than once were seen to lift their veils and dab at their eyes. Through it all Newt and his father grimly watched as the attorney paced before the jury, striving with all his eloquent might to put a noose around the defendant's neck.

Both sides summed up their cases the next day. The defense, according to the *Californian*, delivered "one of the most elaborate and logical arguments that has been heard in the local courts for many a day." Attorney Irwin sought to establish that beyond doubt the shooting was a case of self-defense. Taking up where his partner left off, Emmons devoted most of his time to disproving the special prosecutor's far-fetched deductions. Praising Sander's oratory and acting abilities, Emmons declared that the world of the theatre had lost an eminent member when the prosecutor turned his attention to the law.

AT THREE O'CLOCK the district attorney gave the final summation for the prosecution. He completely dismissed the stagecoach incident as having any relevance to the case. He insisted too that the meeting of the men in Havilah was pure chance and that neither party knew the other would be in town. He argued strongly that murder had been done, however, and declared that Walker's shooting of the victims was inexcusable and not justified by the men's actions. At twenty minutes past five, the jury retired to reach a verdict.

News soon filtered out of the jury room that the panel stood ten for acquittal and two for conviction, but by the time they filed out for dinner they still had not reached a verdict.

After deliberating a little more than four hours, the court was notified that the jury was ready to report. Judge Mahon hastily called court in session and asked Foreman Holmes if they had agreed on a verdict.

"We have, Your Honor. We, the jury in the above entitled case, find the defendant not guilty."

Newt Walker had been leaning forward in his chair and he now sat back with a look of relief on his face. As soon as the court formalities had been dispensed with, Newt and his father both stood up and shook the hand of each juror as he left the box. Dave Burton's widow stepped up to Newt and in turn grasped his hand. It was a strange ending to a unique chain of events in Kern County history.

Throughout the trial it had been noted that Burton's widow had clearly been sympathetic to the defense. After the acquittal, she spoke briefly to a newspaper reporter.

"When you write up the trial today, you can say that I am for the defense." Mrs. Burton smiled and added, "Does that sound romantic?"

It did indeed sound romantic, but it isn't known just what the implications of her comments were. If there were a more basic reason for the Havilah shootout, it didn't come out at the trial. The widow's candid interview, however, must have set tongues to clacking in Bakersfield and the hills around Kernville.

Walker was to be tried for the Bagsby shooting also, but the District Attorney had no recourse but to have the case dismissed. With Newt acquitted of shooting the unarmed Burton, Laird could hardly hope for a conviction for shooting an armed man who fired back at his killer.

When he walked down the courthouse steps with his father and attorney Irwin, Newt Walker was a free man again.

Evidently Newt managed to stay out of trouble for the rest of his life, with two notable exceptions. In the summer of 1924, so the story goes, he had a misunderstanding with one Floyd Fisher when the latter's car was stalled in the deep sand of French Gulch. Newt put two bullets in Fisher, seriously wounding him and necessitating a visit from the Kern County sheriff.

The sheriff, Cas Walser, casually called on Newt and suggested that he accompany him to Bakersfield.

"Why Cas, you ain't got your gun," commented Newt, after quickly noting the sheriff was unarmed.

"Didn't figure I needed one," observed Walser, and the wise western sheriff drove on into Bakersfield with the man who was perhaps the deadliest gunfighter that old California had ever seen. Newt was acquitted of the assault charge, but it was to be the last time he would walk the streets of Bakersfield.

ON A TUESDAY morning, November 25, 1924, Mr. and Mrs. Walter Armstrong called at the ancient cabin of the Walker family in Keyesville. The sturdy log cabin was one of the few remaining structures in the old mining town and had outlived the Walker parents and two of their sons. Newt still called it home—living there with Tex Roland and Frank Murdock, old-time friends. The Armstrongs wanted some mining information from Newt, and when there was no response to their knock the couple walked around to the back door.

When they saw Frank Murdock lying on the ground just outside the back door, the Armstrong's first thought was that he was drunk. Closer examination revealed that Murdock was stiff and very dead. Shocked, the Armstrongs glanced in the back door of the cabin and saw another body lying amid the debris of an overturned kitchen table. Cautiously, Armstrong stepped through the door for a closer look at the shirtless body. Cold in death with a bullet through the heart lay the corpse of Newt Walker.

Kernville authorities were notified and in turn the sheriff's office in Bakersfield. By dusk that evening the county coroner, several deputy sheriffs, and a newspaperman were at the Walker cabin. The party was greeted by a houseful of grim mountaineers from the surrounding hills, who showed the officers the scene of tragedy. Jim, Bill and Phil Walker were there also, their faces ashen and hard. All were armed and eager to start the hunt for the killer of their brother.

Tom Walker lived in his own cabin on the hill in back of the family home. He was known to have played poker with Newt, Roland and Murdock the previous Saturday night, but so far hadn't shown up at the scene of the crime.

The officers quickly made their preliminary investigation. Newt was barefoot and shirtless, a bullet having passed through his arm and into his heart. Murdock had one bullet in the brain, and a bad bruise in the head from a blunt instrument. Some twenty feet from Mur-

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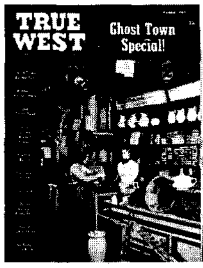

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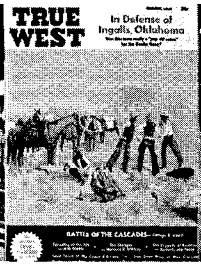

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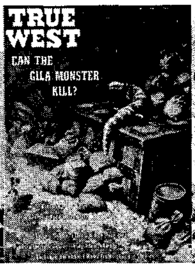

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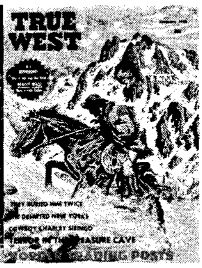

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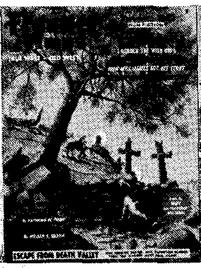

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dock's body an empty .38 revolver was found, which was assumed to be the death weapon.

After questioning some of the neighbors, officers concluded that the men had been dead for several days, probably since late the previous Saturday or early Sunday morning. A quick gathering of the evidence seemed to suggest that they probably had quarreled during a poker game and the shooting resulted. It was feared that Roland, too, might be dead in the vicinity, although hope was expressed that he was alive and could shed some light on the mystery.

Inside the house, officers searched for further clues. Under Newt's mattress were found his favorite weapons, a matched pair of long-barreled Smith and Wesson revolvers and a smaller pocket pistol of the same make. Leaning against the head of the bed was a high-powered Remington automatic rifle and nearby was a shotgun.

Tom Walker had still not shown up at the scene of tragedy and no one seemed to know where he was. Several officers, accompanied by his brother Phil, made the trek up the mountain to Tom's cabin, but finding it empty, returned to the murder scene. The officers then gathered up Newt's weapons in the house and discovered that the small Smith and Wesson had been taken from under the mattress. All attempts to find the weapon proved fruitless.

Charley Woodward, the best of the local trackers, Deputy Phil Fickert and Phil Walker now traced some footprints to a mine shaft near Tom Walker's cabin. Fickert and Walker entered the mine and cautiously explored the interior, scarcely knowing what to expect. Suddenly they came upon a body. Huddled against the side of the tunnel lay the corpse of Tom Walker. In his hand was a revolver and there was a bullet wound in his head. Nearby were two empty bottles of moonshine. The corpse was still limp when found.

TOM'S BODY was brought down the mountainside and laid beside those of his brother and Frank Murdock. Now only Tex Roland had to be accounted for, but the mystery of the multiple deaths was as perplexing as ever. "So all the way through it is 'Tex,'" stated an article in the Bakersfield *Californian.* "Find 'Tex' dead or alive and the mystery is solved, say the mountain men and all day long they search the thousands of gulches, mining shafts and other holes in which the man might be found—dead or alive."

Numerous theories on the tragedy were being advanced, but in lieu of anything concrete, hopes for unraveling the killings lay with discovering what happened to Tex Roland. If he were alive he was obviously the murderer. If dead, a darker solution to the tragedy seemed painfully evident—at least to the mountain people.

It was several days after Newt and Murdock's bodies were discovered that Tex Roland was finally found. Some 300 yards up the mountain in back of Newt's cabin, Roland's body was located in a brush-choked gully. A bloodstained wheelbarrow was hidden nearby, and splashes of blood and ground markings spelled out the story. Although, with all the participants dead, the complete story could never be known, to the mountain people the tragedy was an open book and the officers had to concur.

"Tom went crazy mad," they said. "Killers always go that way sooner or later."

The story, as pieced together by the mountaineers, was a grim tale of mass murder, sparked by moonshine, with few equals in western history. The four men had played poker Saturday night with Newt and Murdock being the winners. All had probably imbibed freely from the contents of their still located nearby. Early Sunday morning, Tom had come down from the cabin, hung-over and disgruntled over losses incurred during the game. Roland was in the back yard, perhaps washing up, when Tom engaged Murdock in a heated argument. Newt was still in bed, but coffee was on the stove and the men were preparing for breakfast.

At the sounds of the arguing, Newt got up and pulled on his trousers just in time to see Tom knock Murdock down with his pistol. Yelling at his brother, Newt rushed to the door, but Tom was beyond control and gripped by an insane fury. Tom shot his unarmed brother as he stood in the doorway and watched as Newt crashed down on the kitchen table. Roland, in the background, had witnessed the whole terrible scene and stood rooted to the ground, too shocked to move. Now he scrambled madly to escape, but Tom whirled and stopped him with a shot in the back, shooting him again in the right breast as the dying man fell. Then stepping up to Murdock's unconscious form, Tom shot him mercilessly in the head and threw the pistol to the ground.

It was probably a few moments later that Tom came to his senses and realized the enormity of his crime. Panic-stricken, he dumped Roland's body in a wheelbarrow and trundled it up the hill and into a gulch. He then evidently went back to his cabin, where he spent the day in an agony of remorse such as is known to few men. That night, torn by his emotions, he went back to the scene of death, and through the cabin window saw the sheeted bodies surrounded by officers and his armed brothers. He was heard prowling about, and the men rushed out of the cabin with their pistols at the ready, but Tom disappeared in the brushy slopes after somehow managing to secure Newt's small pistol from under his brother's mattress. Later, after securing some more moonshine from the hidden still, Tom went into the mine shaft and committed suicide as the only escape from his tortured and shattered life.

Today, the ancient cabin of the Walker clan, still in use, stands hauntingly at the base of Greenhorn Mountain within sight of the lonely Keyesville cemetery. On a grassy, tree-sprinkled knoll, the graves are obliterated and forgotten to all but a few. Only hot summer winds whisper now of men so good with guns they were unable to live out their moment in history.

WESTERN BOOK ROUNDUP

By The Old Bookaroos

A NEVADA GHOST

Treasure Hill (University of Arizona, $5.00) by W. Turrentine Jackson is a case study of a typical mining town, Treasure Hill, Nevada. In 1868 a rich deposit of silver ore was discovered, leading to the establishment of the White Pine Mining District with capital from Great Britain. Jackson chose to write about Treasure Hill because little had been written about the town's history. Its rise and decline contained all the elements in the boom and bust pattern. The strike, promoting the boom, birth of a town, churches, schools, government, labor struggles, water and fire, shrinking capital, decline and abandonment—are the major elements of the book. Jackson's thorough research notes, bibliography, and index make this book a must for mining buffs.

RECOLLECTIN'

Pioneers of the Western Frontier (The Naylor Co., $2.95) by Harriett Farnsworth is a collection of ten true stories of notable persons and places of the West based on interviews with cowboys, miners, outlaws and others who were there. Several of the people the author talked with were over a hundred years old. Fred Kuehn recalled his acquaintance with Hadja Ali—affectionately called "Hi Jolly," one of Jefferson Davis' camel drivers on the western desert. William S. Hart, first western movie hero, told the author of his early years near Yankton, South Dakota, old Fort Randall, and the Sioux Indians who later adopted him into the tribe. Viola Mae Rush, the lady miner of the Bradshaws, was born in Stockholm, Sweden in 1863 and was still going strong in 1967 when she talked with Miss Farnsworth. These eyewitness accounts and the others furnish authentic detail not otherwise available. The book has a foreword by David Raffelock, Director of the National Writers Club and an introduction by Erle Stanley Gardner of "who-done-it" fame and an authority on the desert. The book also contains some choice photos of the principals.

THE MEXICAN VERSION

The Siege & Taking of the Alamo (The Press of the Territorian, $7.50) is based on official Mexican reports. It was written by the noted Mexican military historian and soldier, General Miguel A. Sanchez Lamego, and first published in Spanish in Mexico. It was translated by Dr. Consuelo Velasco, a Cuban by birth and now the wife of the publisher, erudite Phil Cooke. Joseph Hefter, an American who lives in Mexico and the publisher of the book there, contributes some very interesting sidelights. He is another highly regarded military historian and your reviewer found his comments on the flag of the Alamo and the death of Davy Crockett of particular interest. The reproduction of his painting "Santa Anna's Decision to Attack" plus the maps and plans of the Alamo enhance the volume. The book was designed by Karl Tani and printed by the Blue Feather Press of Santa Fe in an edition of 1,500 numbered copies—it is handsomely bound in the tri-colors (green-white-red) of Mexico. This is a distinctive contribution to Texas history—highly recommended.

TOMBSTONE CLASSIC

In recent years Lorenzo D. Walters' *Tombstone's Yesterday, 1877-1887* has become a much sought and expensive book. It has just been reprinted in an attractive format by the Rio Grande Press, priced at $7.50. There is much to recommend this new edition—the publisher's introduction is rewarding; there is a brief preface by Mrs. Burton Devere, an editorial "The Role of Firearms" from *The Arizona Daily Star* (Tucson) for June 12, 1968; a portfolio of photos of present day (1968) Tombstone and a facsimile reprint of *The Tombstone Epitaph* for October 27, 1881, with the story of the O K Corral fight on the first page, is laid in. In addition, the price is right.

BEAVER TRAPPERS

He wrote his first book at age seventy-two and completed *Beaver Skins and Mountain Men,* his sixth, just before his death. Nineteen of Burger's illustrations present details on the beaver, his habitat, and scenes depicting historical events shaped by this extraordinary animal. Highly recommended to Western buffs, biologists, and conservationists, alike. The beaver pelt lured the mountain man as gold lured the *Conquistadores.* The beaver was revered by the Indians as illustrated in many legends and furnished meat for feasts. Great fur companies were organized to finance trappers, gather the beaver furs through the rendezvous system, and transport them to eastern and European markets to satisfy the demand for beaver hats made from the felted fur. *Beaver Skins and Mountain Men* (E. P. Dutton & Co., $5.95) written and illustrated by Carl Burger is a purely delightful book covering all aspects of the beaver in legend, natural history, ecology, archaeology, commerce, and conservation. Burger, a well-known free lance artist, illustrated such books as *Old Yeller* by Fred Gipson, *The Incredible Journey* by Shiela Bumford, and *Little Rascal* by Sterling North.

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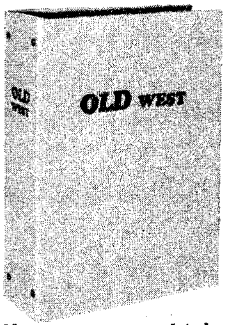

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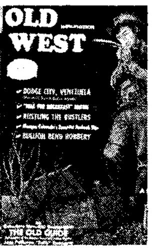
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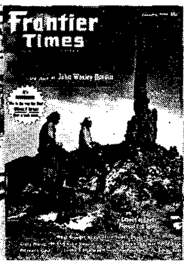
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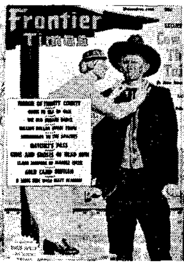
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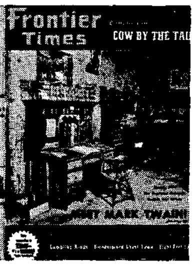
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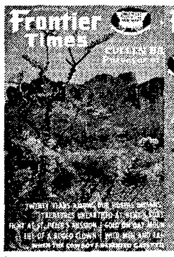
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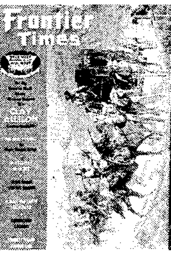
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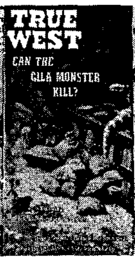
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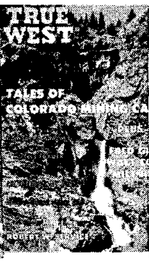
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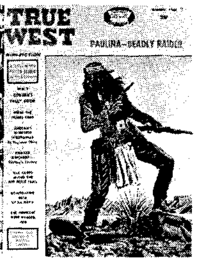
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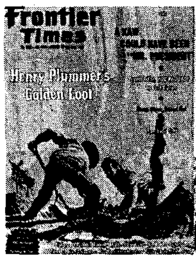
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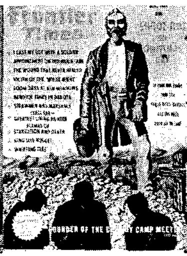
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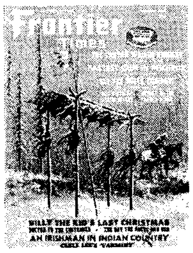
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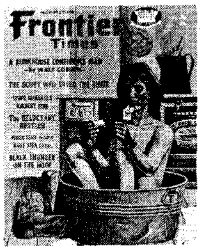
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Destruction of the Devilfish

(Continued from page 32)

which consisted of a harpoon with an attached explosive charge. When the harpoon had penetrated a certain depth into the whale's flesh, the charge was detonated. Safer and more efficient was the bomb-lance-gun. This musket-like weapon could shoot an explosive projectile into a whale from twenty yards. With the devilfish, safety lay in distance. Scammon's new tactics would have to emphasize avoidance of close contact with the whales, especially the wounded ones.

Calling the officers together, the captain presented his plan. The whaleboats were to go to the most narrow channel in the lagoon, then pull to the side where the water was too shallow for a whale to swim in pursuit. There they would wait for a whale to swim by. Harpoon and hand-lance were to be discarded. The sole weapon would be the bomb-lance-gun. He was counting on the known ability of two of his officers to shoot the missiles close to home. If they could kill each whale with no more than three bomb-lances, their supply would last long enough to fill the ships with whale oil. All he asked now was marksmanship—not courage.

Such an unorthodox scheme disturbed the older salts, but there was nothing for them to do but try it. In quick order two boats were prepared for "shooting" and a third one as a relief boat. Positioned in the shoals of a well-traveled channel, the small expedition waited for a whale to swim within range. Little time passed before an obliging devilfish appeared, and a sharp-shooting officer promptly "bombed" it. Of the three whales bombed, one died instantly and the other two were found floating dead the next day.

From that point on, whaling proceeded without any serious problems. The try-works for rendering blubber into oil were put into operation, and whenever another whale was needed, one or two boats simply put out to bomb a devilfish. So endless was the supply of whales that after all the oil barrels had been filled, Scammon had oil poured into the coolers, deck-pots, try-pots and even the empty bread casks.

DESPITE THE FACT that the supply of fresh water was running low, the captain was unconcerned. It was only fifty miles to the springs on Cerros Island. Should they be delayed in leaving the lagoon, the men could dig wells in the sand beaches above the high water mark—a method which had been successful at Magdalena Bay.

At length the *Boston* and the *Marin* were ready to sail. A light land breeze started them down the lagoon but before they could reach the bar, a gusty breeze sprang up, forcing them to drop anchor. A week of anxious waiting passed. At this point the wind turned into a gale. Clinging to the top of the masthead, the lookout could see nothing but a stormy, white-capped sea beyond the channel.

Two more weeks wore by as the winds raged on. Now the water shortage had become acute. Scammon's men soon discovered what the unfortunate crew of the *Tower City* had learned a quarter of a century before—no fresh water could be found anywhere. To conserve what little remained on board, the worried captain put all hands on a ration of a pint of water a day.

When the storm finally moderated to a strong breeze, Scammon grabbed the chance to escape to sea. With their keels scraping the sandy bottom, the ships laboriously ploughed through the treacherous waterway. No sooner had they plied beyond the shoals of the bay than the gale burst upon them once more. That night, with the sea breaking over the ships, the whalers steered westward for Cerros Island and fresh water. Morning brought them to their destination but because of continuing bad weather, it took nearly all day to gain safe anchorage. Fresh water was almost within sight, but the storm was still so brutal that it was impossible to leave the ships.

AFTER TWO seemingly endless days, the winds died down. Scammon immediately dispatched a boat for the desperately needed water. In a short while the men were revived, water and wood had been put on board, and the vessels were as shipshape as they could be made. At last they set sail for San Francisco.

Scammon must have been proud as his ships cut through the waters of the Golden Gate. Through bold improvisation and pure Yankee stubbornness, he had outwitted the wily devilfish. So deeply laden were the *Boston* and the *Marin* that their scuppers were awash.

No matter how enterprising a single whaling captain might be, he did not present a mortal danger to the California gray whales. But shortly after Scammon had returned to the lagoon the next season, several ships appeared outside the channel entrance, and six of them managed to make their way into the formerly undisturbed refuge of the whales. So briefly a few men's secret, its location now was common knowledge among the Pacific whaling fleet.

Just how news of the lagoon leaked out is as much of a mystery as how Scammon found it in the first place. According to one version, he swore the crew to secrecy, but his short trips and huge cargoes soon caused a stir along the Embarcadero. Several whalers followed him down the California coast, but he slipped away from his pursuers at night and entered the lagoon undetected. Then the pungent odor of blubber trying-out drifted toward Cerros Island where a competitor was searching for him. His pursuers simply followed their noses until they too struck oil. Another variation tells how a passing rival whaler spied black smoke boiling up from the try-works. In a third account Scammon's mate supposedly tipped off his brother who commanded a whaler in the northern Pacific. Despite a certain credibility to each story, all contend that Scammon succeeded in making at least one clandestine sortie after the voyage of discovery. The Captain's own account in *Marine Mammals*, however, contradicts this claim.

"The following season found us again in the lagoon, with a little squadron of vessels, consisting of one bark and two small schooners. Although this newly discovered whaling-ground was difficult of approach, and but very little known abroad—and especially the channel which led to it—yet, soon after our arrival, a large fleet of ships hovered for weeks off the entrance, or along the adjacent coast, and six of the number succeeded in finding their way in. The whole force pursuing the whales that season numbered nine vessels, which lowered thirty boats. Of this number, at least twenty-five were daily engaged in whaling."

Perhap the most plausible explanation comes from D. Raymond Gilmore, present-day expert on the gray whales and an admirer of Scammon. As he succinctly puts it, "The secret was out as soon as the boys hit the gin mills in San Francisco."

THAT SECOND season of 1858-1859 was the beginning of the systematic exploitation of Scammon's Lagoon. (The name of its discoverer was soon applied and is still used today.) Eager whalers hounded the devilfish, and the air crackled with the report of bomb guns. Tormented whales spouted blood in their death flurries as the whalers bawled out curses and orders in English, Portuguese and a variety of South Sea tongues. By the end of 1861 more than 22,000 barrels of whale oil had been taken there.

Less than ten years after he first had entered this secluded place Scammon wrote, "At the present time, however, so few whales are found there that it has been abandoned as a whaling-ground; the decaying carcasses and bleaching bones strewed along the shores give evidence of the havoc made by the most enterprising and energetic class of seamen that sail under our national flag."

Winter whalers scoured every navigable inlet and estuary frequented by the gray whales. In several years more than two dozen whaling and sealing camps operated south of San Diego, and up to 2,000 men were employed in killing, flensing and trying-out. At the same time the whales' habit of navigating by sightings of bays and headlands, which forced them to swim within a few miles of shore, inspired a different sort of assault. Dispensing with costly ships and long voyages, whalers simply rowed out from shore in whaleboats and killed what whales they could during the migration. When the whales became so cautious that it was nearly impossible to strike them with a hand-thrown harpoon, Greener's harpoon-gun, capable of making a hit within thirty yards, kept the shore whalers in business a little longer.

Total annihilation of the California gray whales probably was averted by a combination of factors. Many captains, including Scammon, did not return to whaling after the Civil War. By the mid-1870s the scarcity of gray whales had sent even shore whaling into a decline. In the meantime inflation raised the cost of outfitting ships and shore stations so that profits fell badly. Finally the competition from kerosene reduced both the price of whale oil and its importance as an illuminating fuel.

Before the gray whales almost completely disappeared from the American scene, Scammon recorded their fascinating story in *Marine Mammals.* Chiefly a work of natural history, this highly readable book recounts the discovery of the lagoon and the exciting days of devilfishing. Nearly a century after its publication in 1874, it still is regarded as a classic work on the California gray whale, and rare copies are read eagerly by marine biologists and lovers of whaling lore.

Scammon continued his seafaring as a captain in the U. S. Revenue Service. His career, extending from 1863 to 1883, took him to Alaska, Florida and Texas. After retirement he wrote occasional articles for *Overland Magazine.* He died in Fruitvale, California in 1911.

Just a year later, Roy Chapman Andrews, while on an expedition to Korea for the American Museum of Natural History, came across the *koku kujira* or "devilfish" hunted by Japanese whalers along the northeastern coast of Asia. Comparing the *koku kujira* with Scammon's detailed descriptions of the California gray whale, he concluded that they were the same species. Despite the impression left by Andrews in his *Ends of the Earth,* authorities doubt that the California herd was totally wiped out or that it was replenished by the Asiatic herd. This latter conclusion is based on the observation that a thousand miles of coastline separates the summer feeding grounds of the two groups.

THE GRAY WHALES recovered enough in the 1930s to encourage Russian and American whalers to hunt them along the California coast. This time the International Whaling Commission acted before their fate of near-extinction could be re-enacted. The United States, Russia, Canada, Mexico and several other nations agreed in 1938 not to kill California gray whales. Only aborigines, such as Indians and Eskimos, may hunt them for food, just as they have done since before the time of Scammon.

Allowed to flourish for nearly three decades, the whales now number more than 6,000. As a result whale-watching has become a popular winter pastime. Whales can be seen spouting and diving from December through March from such California vantage points as Point Pine on the southern tip of Monterey Bay, Point Sur, Point Conception, the Palos Verdes Cliffs south of Los Angeles, La Jolla and Point Loma. The last two places are located in San Diego where the work of scientists has created a public awareness of the whales' value as a natural resource. Each winter San Diego sportfishing boats take thousands of curious natives, visitors and school children a few miles out to sea for a really close look at the California gray whales.

Scammon's Lagoon is nearly as much of a wilderness today as it was at the time of its discovery. Once more a major part of the herd of California gray whales winters there in seclusion. Besides the scientists who study their habits and count their numbers (usually from an airplane), few visitors come to the lagoon.

Nearby Guerrero Negro Lagoon is the site of the world's largest salt-producing plant, but workers in the small company town pay little attention to the whales. These leviathans of American wildlife have managed to survive, and so has the memory of their hunter—Charles Melville Scammon, the intrepid whaler who refused to be done in by the devilfish.

The Thousand Dollar Tree

(Continued from page 29)

or retrieve his gold plants without fear of discovery from the cabin.

Inspecting only the largest trees, McGuire left a faint mark on the north side of each so as not to bother with them again. So cleverly had the holes been disguised that the cowboy almost walked away from his first discovery. One area did not appear to match up with the lines and dull brown flat places in the bark. Some traces of gum also showed in an odd cross-hatching of the smooth bark. His nerves tingled as he cut the bark away and exposed a plug. Working it out, he could see nothing inside. A stick went in more than a foot. The hole was empty. Knowing such openings would be a dead giveaway, McGuire promptly filled it and camouflaged the outside bark. The following week he found two more. They were also empty, so Casner must have found these small caches.

ONE NIGHT a large bunch of Rogers' cattle drifted south. Fearing they would stray too far, McGuire rounded them up the next morning and drove them back onto the range where they belonged. The second time he did so two riders stationed there saw him and reported it to Rogers.

A few days later Rogers came down to the cabin and inquired what McGuire was doing there.

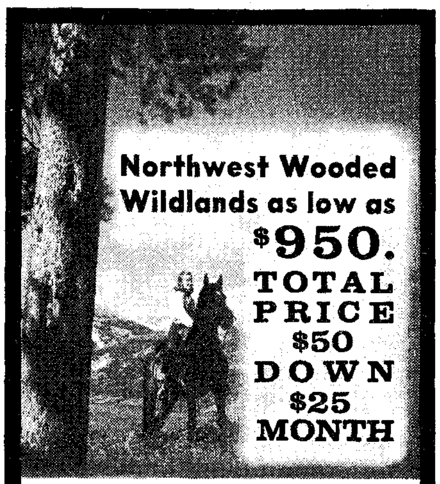
"Oh, just sort of loafing and resting up."

When asked if he wanted to return to work for the outfit, McGuire shook his head. "Thanks, but maybe a little later on."

Before leaving, Rogers told him that he would put him on at half-pay if he would continue drifting the cattle back when they strayed far south. This was agreeable and turned out to be lucky for McGuire.

One afternoon he spotted three strangers with a pack outfit moving through the forest and heading straight for the cabin. There they halted, gazing around as though surprised that someone occupied it.

McGuire soon made his appearance. The men nodded tersely and one of them asked what he was doing there. Despite the discourtesy of the question, McGuire answered him pleasantly.



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"I'm a line rider for the Rogers Cattle Company."

That appeared to satisfy them. "Mind if we camp nearby for a few days?" the spokesman asked. "Thought we might prospect the mountain a bit."

"Help yourself," McGuire replied. "I've seen some gray quartz around."

The men went up on the mountain, following a well-defined trail to the spring, and camped near it. Their presence stopped McGuire from hunting much, for he figured they were after the same thing he was.

In a few days, restless over the delay, McGuire left the cabin packing his carbine. He found two trees on which the bark might have been replaced but he left them alone, planning to cut into them later.

As proof that he was merely hunting, he shot a fat buck one day, and later a yearling bear which had come prowling around. He also rode out from the cabin twice to drive Rogers' cattle north. On those occasions he let himself be seen to substantiate his claim of being Rogers' employe.

The strangers hung around the balance of the summer. One night two of them came to the cabin and talked awhile.

Asked one, "Did you ever hear of a lost mine around here any place?"

McGuire told them an ancient Spanish mine was supposedly somewhere in Sycamore Canyon, but though they listened politely, the men were obviously not interested.

"How about up here on top?" the same one asked. "Anything worth looking for?"

McGuire answered with a shrug of the shoulders, "Nothing. Just ain't nothing valuable around here or on the mountain that I know of. Been a lot of fellers poking around for nothing the last several years."

After further desultory conversation the two departed for their camp. The next day the party pulled out down Mooney Trail.

With them out of the way McGuire opened up the two trees. Holes were in both and had been replugged. The first was empty but the second contained forty eagles. The lucky find represented more money than McGuire could make in a year riding after cow critters.

Both borings were disguised and he hunted harder and farther out. But by the time the first snow fell he had nothing more—not even an empty hole. While this snow wasn't deep the next might close the area solid, so for a few days the cowboy considered going to Flagstaff to spend the winter. Instead he concluded to continue hunting.

CUTTING WOOD was the first order of business. He got in a supply to last three months. In between wood chopping he kept up his methodical checking of the pines. It wasn't likely that anyone would come around to bother him.

A week before Christmas he found a money tree nearly a mile away, almost on the rim of Sycamore Canyon. It contained two caches. The trunk was about four feet in diameter and the borings very deep.

The first few double eagles were removed easily. All had been minted before 1873. They had been there so long that the wood had grown around those deep inside. In the end McGuire was forced to cut down the tree to get them out. The total value was an even thousand dollars.

Tired of eating deer meat, McGuire decided to go to Flagstaff for supplies. He set out before dawn with a pack mule and arrived in town early. There, he went to a private bank, exchanging the coins for currency. After buying grub he loitered in a saloon on Whiskey Row for an hour before setting out for Casner Mountain.

While en route the wind rose, filling the air with snow. Not until long after dark did he reach home. Outside the wind howled and frozen particles of snow hurled against the cabin.

Through all this noise he was startled to hear riders coming in. Halting before the door they dismounted and entered in a rush without bothering to knock. Both were encased in long sheep-lined coats, hoar frost on their faces.

Despite their hardcase appearance they greeted McGuire in a friendly way.

"I'm Doug Hall," the largest of the pair began. "Sure is fine to find a place here. Mighty nigh froze out there!"

Hall's partner merely turned his face to the fire, holding out his hands to warm. At no time did he introduce himself or speak more than two words.

"Any chance to throw in with you for the night?" Hall asked.

With a storm raging and the temperature a few degrees below zero there wasn't much McGuire could do except agree. He told them to put their stock in the corral and they went to do so. During their absence he hid his money behind wall chinking and was frying venison steaks when they returned.

After eating, the pair spread saddle blankets before the fireplace. McGuire handed over two of his extra quilts. During the night while lying on the wall bunk he heard them whispering at length and their muted conversation gave him an uneasy feeling.

The storm still blew a gale the next morning. While the strangers tended the stock McGuire cooked breakfast. By no means could they travel on that day, yet they did not verbally rue the fact or even mention the matter. Indeed they settled down as if intending to stay awhile. That would run McGuire short on both food and grain.

Before noon the cowboy plowed through the snow and wind to check on his stock. He discovered that instead of feeding their horses a regular ration his uninvited guests had doubled it.

Returning to the cabin McGuire said pleasantly but firmly, "Fellows, we've got to go easy on the grain. There's no chance for me to pack in any more before spring."

The short man glowered at him, and Hall snarled, "So you're going to be chinchy about that too?"

"I'm not cheap about anything," McGuire replied, aware then that they were building up trouble. "I packed in only enough grain for my own stock, not expecting company."

While speaking he turned into the cabin end, startled to see everything out of place. Even his bunk bedding had been searched. Nothing had been replaced exactly as he had had it.

During supper Hall, staring straight at McGuire, said, "We hear tell you found old Casner's gold. Like to see what the stuff looks like."

"You heard wrong. As for Casner's supposed gold, I don't think there is any. Guess as how he must have shipped it all to California."

"Don't give me that! You traded a lot of gold for paper money in town." The banker must have talked.

"That don't mean it was Casner's gold."

The subject dropped there. The two kept to themselves as before, doing none of the necessary work except overfeeding their stock after a late rising. They let McGuire do all the cooking and washing up afterward. Wood had to be brought in and snow melted for water and he performed the chores alone.

ONE MORNING the wind lay and the sun came out bright in a blue sky. Appraising the weather from the doorway, McGuire turned back inside leaving the door open. Walking over to the bunk he leaned against it, his rifle handy on some wall pegs to the right. Both Hall and his partner carried pistols inside their shirts.

"The weather has cleared," McGuire said meaningly. "You fellows might as well be riding on your way."

"Done wore out our welcome?" Hall asked, chuckling wryly. "We'll go on tomorrow—if it suits us to!" Ending the threat his hand dropped toward the unbuttoned part of his shirt front for a quick grab at a gun.

The move was a mistake for McGuire brought his rifle off the wall fast and pulled the hammer back. "You're riding right now!"

Hall lowered his hand from his shirt front slowly. His partner stared hard-eyed. Both evidently thought briefly of jumping him and then calmed down.

"You ain't going to run us out into that deep snow?" Hall queried in a whining voice.

"As of right now. Collect your stuff."

In a sullen mood they complied. McGuire followed behind them along the path to the corral and shed. At the gate he let the hammer down, quickly levering a cartridge into the firing chamber. Until then they had not suspected the rifle wasn't kept ready to fire.

The two caught their horses and saddled up. As they led out of the corral and mounted, Hall asked if they couldn't have a feed of grain for their horses and some chuck.

"You can make it to Flagstaff," McGuire replied. "I haven't got any to spare and will run short myself."

"We ain't going that way!"

Remaining adamant, McGuire watched them head south in the timber. He might have known they wouldn't get far, and probably they didn't even try.

Slipping back after an early sundown, their presence was known when the door whammed open and Hall leaped in be-

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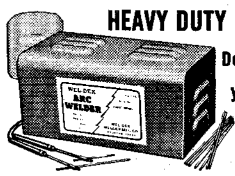

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hind a drawn gun, his partner at his heels. McGuire was caught flat-footed at the fireplace, away from the rifle.

"Now we'll see who's boss around here!" Hall declared.

His partner seized the rifle and they tied McGuire hand and foot, dropping him to the floor against the side wall.

"Where's your wad of money?" Hall demanded.

"Left it in town with a barkeep," the cowboy lied.

"That damned well ain't so. Maybe a few Injun tricks will make you sing another tune!"

With McGuire helpless, the two gave the cabin a very thorough search, almost tearing it down. Even an open sack of flour was emptied to see if the money had been hidden in the bottom. (McGuire followed the Arizona custom of opening a sack of flour, rolling the sides down as used, and mixing water in the top to make bread dough.)

Threatening McGuire with torture failed to get any response from him. He was untied and ordered to cook a meal. Watched closely during his work he got no chance to catch them unawares. Before they ate he was bound again.

Afterward they chunked up the fire and both crowded into the single bunk with their clothes on. The fire died down and McGuire was freezing before one of them roused out long enough to pile wood into the fireplace.

By daylight McGuire was again cold and very stiff. Hall released him only so he could prepare breakfast. As meat and bread cooked in the fireplace Hall got a bag and started filling it with provisions.

His partner sat at the small square table, a gun in his lap, impatiently waiting to eat. Bringing the small Dutch oven off the coals to the table McGuire suddenly slammed it into his face. Screaming, the hardcase leaped upward and McGuire seized the gun from his hands.

In the far corner Hall whirled, jerked his gun, and fired once, missing. McGuire put a bullet through Hall's upper right shoulder. Both men were secured, although Hall was allowed a sling for the arm.

McGuire took his time eating breakfast. Then he marched the prisoners out to the corral. There their horses were saddled and the unruly men tied on securely. McGuire set out through the bright sunlight for Flagstaff.

Hall was begging that they be allowed to go their way. McGuire ignored him, arriving in town in the middle of the afternoon. From a sidewalk crowd watching the strange procession stepped Peter H. Brogden, acting deputy for the county sheriff at Prescott (Flagstaff was then in Yavapai County).

For good reason, he wasn't as interested in the prisoners as the horses and saddles they forked.

"Stole them right here in town!" he exclaimed. "Lookit the brands. We wondered where they got off to."

Hall and his partner were jailed for horse theft, tried in district court and sentenced to the penitentiary.

After resting over, McGuire bought a little more grub and returned to the Casner cabin. He spent the rest of the winter there, and began searching the trees again as the snow melted down. He continued until June before giving up.

In Flagstaff McGuire visited often with Brogden and one day gave him the entire story of the trees in which Casner had cached a fortune. After a year or so he drifted elsewhere and as far as is known never hunted for the gold again.

Brogden never revealed whether he himself searched for the gold-laden trees, but in later years he gave the account in great detail to his stepsons, Warren H., Lee M. and Dave Pierce. For several summers the Pierce brothers made periodic tries around the Casner ranch site, without any luck. The cabin, barn, shed and corral burned down about thirty years ago. For awhile a barbed wire corral was maintained to hold cattle during roundup times.

Warren Pierce never quit looking if he were around Casner Mountain against the rim of Sycamore Canyon. Then almost by accident, last summer Warren found three huge pine trees which had been bored into and plugged. All the holes were empty. These trees were not on the Casner ranch site. They were found beside the trail passing between Casner Mountain and Black Hill.

Bear and cougar still abound in the forest wilderness around Casner Mountain. Rattlesnakes are also a menace and have been encountered on every one of the Pierce brothers' trips into the area. Rifles were kept handy on the trail and in camp just in case of attack by larger beasts. Although none of these animals has jumped them as yet, they are seen close at hand during all their searches.

Casner Mountain is reached via Coconino National Forest roads from Flagstaff. It is the area which the Department of Interior proposes to set aside as a national wilderness area.

Remember the Chili Queens?

(Continued from page 33)

cost a dime, ten cents. A Mexican bootblack and a silk-hatted tourist would line up alongside and eat side by side, unconscious or oblivious of the other. It was the democracy of Bohemia, the good old days when we believed in the Declaration of Independence that all men are free and equal, at least at the chili stands.

But the chili con carne industry might never have become world renowned and celebrated in song and story but for its necessary concomitant, the "chili queens." They were the raven-haired, flashing-eyed *señoritas* of more or less pulchritude who served the customers and presided with easy grace. Some of them were bewitching creatures, or seemed to be so in those days of our youth.

They would put themselves out to be agreeable to well-behaved customers and tourists, but they could hold their own in sharp badinage with the kidders, and if necessary they could do a little effective "cussin' " to hold things down and stop any rough stuff that might be started by a rowdy rounder. The chili queens became famous.

The chili stands were out every night in all kinds of weather. They were movable feasts. Their laughing owners came forth every evening about six o'clock and spread their tables and wares and started up their fires on the little space allotted them. In a little while they were ready for business.

An old *duenna*, apparently 100 years old, usually stirred the fire and cooked the viands. She usually kept a watchful eye on the queen, especially when some of the young *Americano* blades were about with their prankish ways and flip talk.

THE CHILI QUEEN would take the order with a lurking coquettish smile, which she couldn't help, even if it wasn't conducive to the salvation of her soul, and then she'd sing out to the old crone: *"Un medio tamales y chili gravy, un plata frijoles, un enchilada y tassa cafe."*

The chili queen understood the art of coquetting with a dude and getting his custom, even to touching him for a pack of cigarettes, but when it came to serious matters of the heart she passed him up. When she married she generally fell for some big-hatted *cavallero* of the cow range or some monte dealer or gay dandy from across the San Pedro, dressed like a grand opera tenor.

"Martha, you're sure looking pretty tonight," ventured a young sprout who had dropped by to eat a bait of chili on his way from a Belknap Rifle dance.

"So sorry, keed," snapped back the chili queen, not half displeased, as her sparkling eyes beamed and she displayed her white teeth to advantage, "but ah ain't got a nickel to geev you. Does your mother know you're out?"

Most of the queens were of Spanish descent or Mexican, but Anglo-Saxon aggressiveness asserted itself even in this limited field of conquest. The acknowledged queen of all the queens was an American girl, Sadie. On account of her beauty and vivacity and aptitude of repartee, she became so popular that she opened a *fonda* of her own under a roof, but was not suffered to brave the world alone for long. A young ranchman came along and married her and she is now [1927] probably existing somewhere on a lonely ranch toward where the sun sets and the coyotes howl.

Martha, black-eyed, tall and slender, with a toss of her head and a smile that made you think of Carmen, was a good second to Sadie. Martha was induced to join out with a wild west show as a cowgirl and ten-thousand-dollar Mexican beauty, but finally quit show business and settled down in El Paso. Others also known to popularity and local fame were Josfina, little Jovita, Dosa and Lily.

But alas and alack! Romance and glamor cannot last always, any more than youth and good looks. Most of the old chili queens retired from their tables and were lost to the public eye when Callahan moved the stands from Military Plaza and sent them across the creek. When they married there was neither law nor custom to make their husbands kings, so they laid aside their crowns and ever afterward lived the prosy, simple, everyday life of ordinary mortals, even as you and I.

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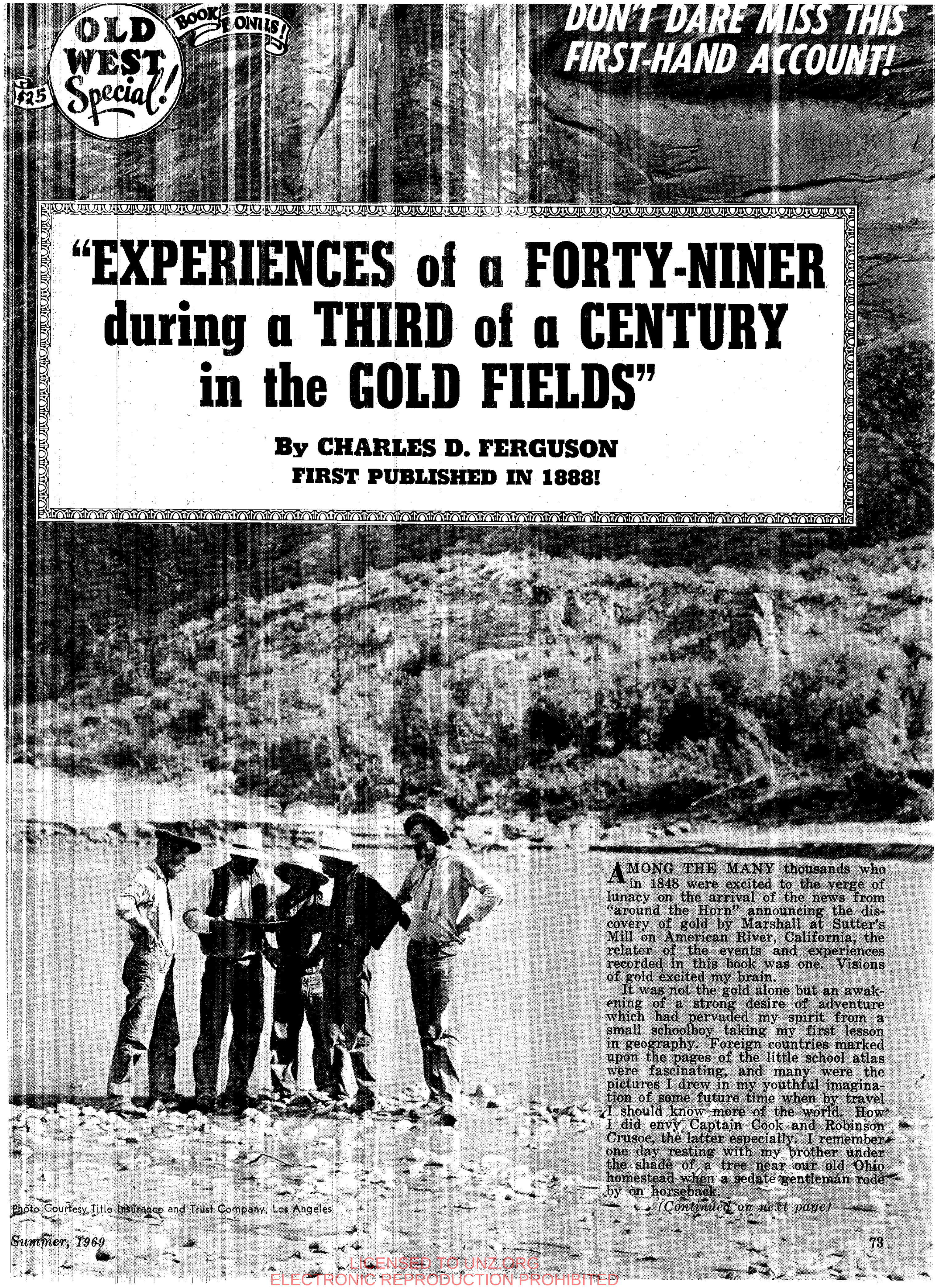


Photo Courtesy Title Insurance and Trust Company, Los Angeles

AMONG THE MANY thousands who in 1848 were excited to the verge of lunacy on the arrival of the news from "around the Horn" announcing the discovery of gold by Marshall at Sutter's Mill on American River, California, the relater of the events and experiences recorded in this book was one. Visions of gold excited my brain.

It was not the gold alone but an awakening of a strong desire of adventure which had pervaded my spirit from a small schoolboy taking my first lesson in geography. Foreign countries marked upon the pages of the little school atlas were fascinating, and many were the pictures I drew in my youthful imagination of some future time when by travel I should know more of the world. How I did envy Captain Cook and Robinson Crusoe, the latter especially. I remember one day resting with my brother under the shade of a tree near our old Ohio homestead when a sedate gentleman rode by on horseback.

(Continued on next page)

"Do you know that man?" said my brother.

I said, "No."

"That is Judge Eben Newton," said my brother, "and he is what I will be some day. What will you be?"

"I will be a traveler," said I, "and see the world."

It is a strange coincidence that the two lads under the shade tree reached, respectively, the height of his boyish ambition—I to my heart's content.

There were numerous other boys in our neighborhood who had the gold fever, caught doubtless in some instances from me—for it was surely "catching." Many were the evenings we got together and laid our plans. There was not a newspaper that had an item about gold that was not learned by heart and great pains taken to enlarge and embellish the accounts to our parents. When I succeeded in getting my dear old father's and mother's consent to let me go, I was the proudest boy in Ohio. Pictures of untold wealth nearly drove me wild.

This, however, was but for a short period for as the time drew near for my departure, my parents suddenly changed their minds. I was too young, they said, to go out into the world of temptations and especially among the Indians. My heart sank ten degrees below zero but it was of no use; the old people had settled it and go I should not. But to conciliate my wounded spirit and recompense me for my disappointment, they agreed that I might go and visit Doctor George W. McKinney, a half-brother living at Ottawa, Illinois. I grasped the situation. Now was my chance and I was determined not to throw it away.

I appeared to be satisfied with the arrangement and soon left home, little thinking that thirty-four years would pass away before I should return and then to find that other hands than mine had to assist in laying my aged and gray-haired parents in their quiet rural graves and that, too, many long years before their seemingly thoughtless but not unfeeling son returned. Oh how many sleepless nights, how many anxious hours they have waited and waited for my return! My dear old mother's dying words were: "Tell Charles I waited and waited until I can wait no longer and only hope to meet him in Heaven." Heaven rest her soul. May her joys surpass the sorrows I caused her here upon earth.

IT WAS in the month of September 1849 when at the age of seventeen years I bade good-bye to father, mother and friends and repaired to Cleveland where I embarked on the lake steamer *A. D. Patchen* for Chicago. It was late in the season, the weather generally rough, and my trip was not an exception unless it was unusually rough which I think it was since I have experienced many severe storms on the ocean hardly more severe. Had I been on shore and safe at home I would have been content to remain there and let gold-seeking go to David Jones' locker. But that feeling soon vanished after arriving at Chicago. It was, however, not the Chicago of today for I think the population did not exceed 1,700.

Among the incidents of this lake voyage was one on Lake Huron. There were many clergymen passengers on board who were on their return from a conference at Buffalo. In the midst of the storm Captain Whitaker passed through the saloon in a great hurry when the ministers accosted him to know if there was any danger?

"Danger! Yes, we will all be in h - - l together in less than ten minutes!"

The ministers united in both audible and silent prayer till the storm abated. A passenger came aboard at some port near the head of Lake Michigan. He had been left by some other boat the day before. He was intoxicated and after supper walked out on the hurricane deck and fell overboard. The engine was stopped and boats lowered but to no purpose; the poor fellow had sunk to rise no more unless at the final resurrection. His wife came aboard at Chicago to look for him. But alas no husband was there and the only memento she obtained was his hat. Thus ended my first voyage on the inland seas.

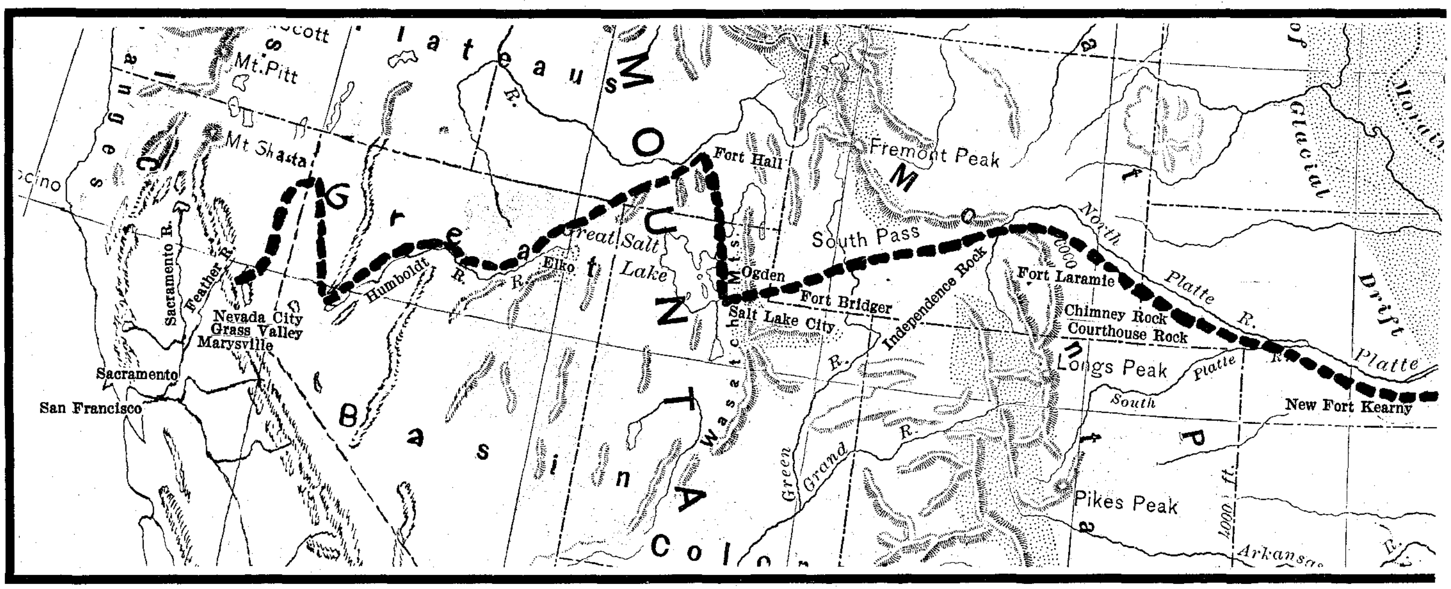
From Chicago to Ottawa, eighteen miles by canal, took twenty-four hours, which is now accomplished by rail in less than three. At Ottawa I found the gold excitement as intense, if not more so, than in Ohio; so there was no hope for my recovery from the fever since I had already relapsed from the first attack and doctors say a relapse is more liable to be fatal than the first attack. I found it so in my case. There is no disease or desire on earth so contagious as gold fever. There is no asylum for the patient and no physician who can minister to a mind thus diseased.

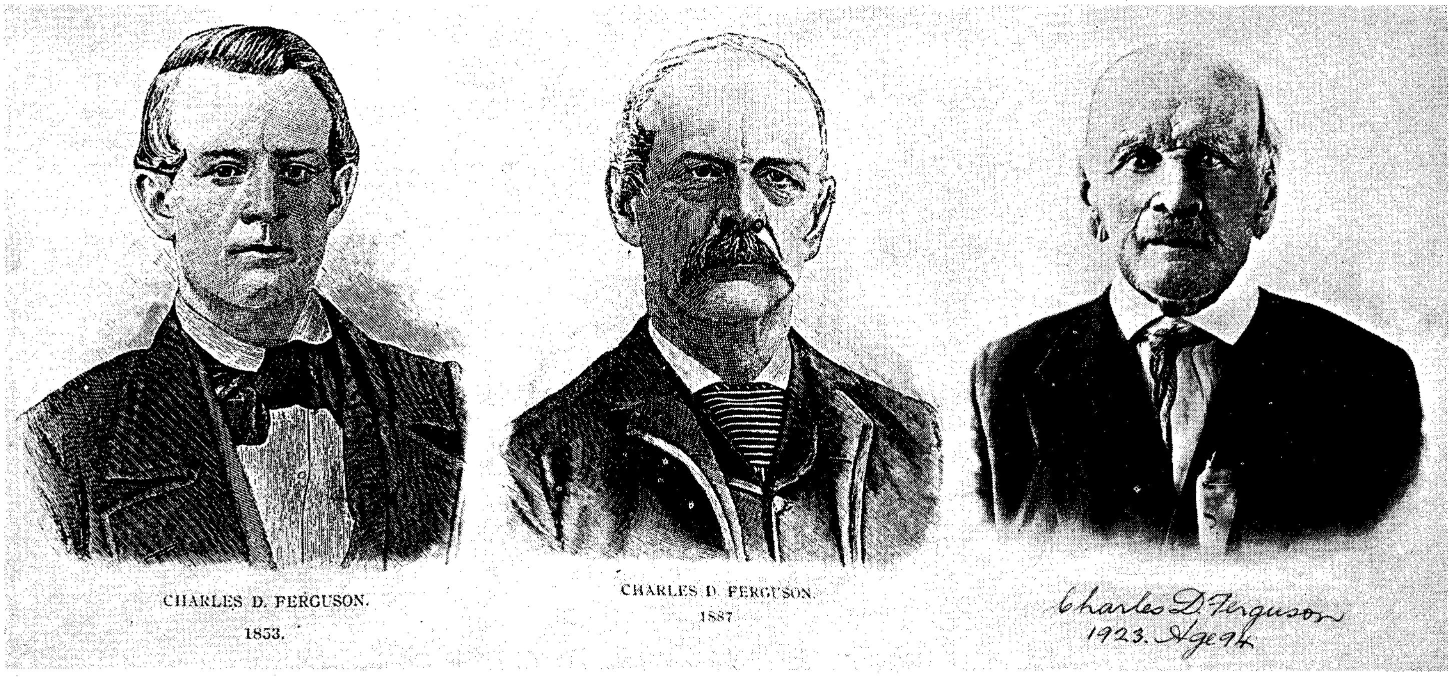
My mind was made up to go to California and nothing but death could stop me. How to get away was the only thing that troubled me. I had spent my money rather freely among my brother's friends, to whom in a short time I had become quite warmly attached and who in compliment to my cheerful intercourse with them unanimously voted me a "chip off the old block," however that may be interpreted. Most of them are dead now (1887). A few remain in Ottawa. Arthur Lockwood is still there. William Earle now lives at La Salle, Colorado I believe, though I have not seen him since my return to this country. Doctor Thomas, another of my early Ottawa friends, lives in Samanock, La Salle County, Illinois and whom I recently had the pleasure of visiting. Others if they still live are scattered and distributed among the great states of the West and whom I shall never probably meet again on earth.

HOW TO approach my brother on the subject of going to California was a perplexing matter to me. Soon however a favorable moment came. Winter had nearly gone and spring was approaching with all its suggestiveness of activity and labor. One day my brother asked me what I intended to do. My courage failed me when put to the test. I answered that I did not know. He made me several offers and suggested several fields of enterprise which almost any young man in less excitable times would have deemed advantageous and fortunate but all of which I declined. My apparent indifference to his every suggestion doubtless seemed to him to indicate either stupidity or ingratitude and he was justly provoked when he passionately said, "What in h - - l do you want to do?"

My brother's indignation inspired me with boldness. This was my opportunity and I improved it by saying in the most frank and respectful manner possible that I wanted to go to California. He made no reply but called his wife and said to her: "This young man wants to go to California," and without waiting for her even to express her astonish-

Charles D. Ferguson party's approximate route (broad broken line) from St. Louis, Missouri to the gold fields of California's Sierra Nevada Mountains in 1850.





CHARLES D. FERGUSON.
1853.

CHARLES D. FERGUSON.
1887

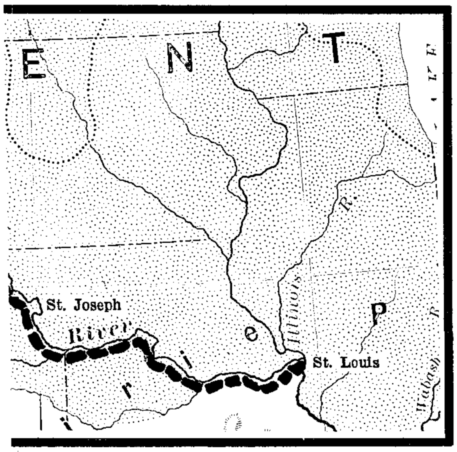
Charles D. Ferguson
1923. Age 94

"The last of the actual Forty-Niners."

ment he told her to pack my things and let me go. She pleaded with me for my mother's sake, but to no purpose. I was going now and no mistake.

There were three others, Ottawa friends of Doctor Thomas and pleasant acquaintances of mine, who were making arrangements to go and I entered into an agreement to join them. All things being ready and considering delays dangerous, we were anxious to be off at once. So on the fourteenth of March 1850 we left Ottawa for Peru where we were to take a steamer for St. Louis. We found a steamer about ready to run down the Illinois River. The captain of the *Ocean Wave*, for such was its imposing name, agreed to take ourselves, four in number, four horses and a wagon to St. Louis for the modest sum of twenty-four dollars. The only stop we made down the river of any considerable length of time was at Peoria and I shall ever remember this place for the pleasant impressions it made upon my mind. Even at this early day it was quite imposing—a magnificent place. I had never seen then, nor have I since, a place where nature had been so lavish in her endowments to make a beautiful city. I have thought of it and spoken of it many times in foreign lands as the loveliest little town I ever saw.

We arrived in St. Louis on the eighteenth of March. Here I was impressed with the vast numbers of steamers along the levee. It seemed to me they numbered thousands. For miles along the levee they lay three and four deep. The sugar and cotton steamers belonging to the lower Mississippi were readily distinguished from those of the upper Mississippi. The hands on board the former were all Negroes. When night came they would assemble around the capstan and one would lead off in a song. The others would join in, the next boat's crew would take it up, and so on until the whole was one grand chorus from one end of the levee to the other. Since then I have listened to fashionable operas and heard renowned prima-donnas but never have I heard the human voice utter such sweetness and melody as then and there came from the lips of the dusky boatmen of the Mississippi.



We placed our horses in a livery on Third Street and took up our quarters on the same street at a hotel, the name of which I have forgotten. I only remember it was the best hotel then in St. Louis. I always have had a weakness that way—when traveling to patronize the best, which I have always found cheapest in the end. Besides if one puts up at a respectable house he has the advantage of better associations and many times, especially if he is a stranger, it may possibly lead him in the way of business if perchance he may be a second Micawber waiting for something to turn up.

Our first necessity incident to the great, laborious and hazardous enterprise of traveling the almost unknown interior of the continent, its vast plains, great rivers, dangerous and doubtful passes, and terrific canyons of the Rocky Mountains was to purchase a stock of provisions. This consisted chiefly of bacon, flour, hardtack, tea, coffee and sugar. Two quarts of No. 6 extract of cayenne pepper was deemed a necessity, as was also a gallon of the best brandy procurable. Each purchased a Colt's revolver with ample accompaniments, which we afterwards and on many occasions found to be a very potent and influential Indian persuader.

Our next business was to look for a steamer bound for St. Joseph, some 300 miles up the Missouri River. This was not a very difficult task as there were many along the upper levee all ready to start and each one offered the best advantage and each was represented to arrive there in the shortest possible time. I may here remark that these river steamers had each its own particular route and river waters. Those which ply on the Illinois River do not run up the Mississippi, only to St. Louis, and the Missouri steamers come down only to the same city and the great cotton and sugar transports and passenger boats of the lower Mississippi do not ply above the same point.

It was somewhat difficult to decide upon a boat among so many and all holding out pleasant inducements but we finally made our selection and paid our passage—six dollars each—which also covered the transportation of our horses, wagon, provisions and provender. It was the best and cheapest contract we could make, as we thought then, but the sequel failed to confirm our opinion.

WE WERE now treading the deck of the *Orient*. The charm of the name seemed to surpass that of the *Ocean Wave* but when we got fairly underway and even before we entered upon the long stretch of the Missouri and took a survey of our numerous companions of the voyage, the romance and poetry suggested by the names of western river steamers vanished. I have traveled some since but never have I fell in with such a congregation of self-conceited, ignorant, disagreeable and annoying lot of passengers as crowded the *Orient*. I do not believe another such lot ever got together. Others have related to me similar experiences but not a single instance could hold a candle to this experience of my own.

I have always observed, when thrown among people that were ignorant, rough and mean, that they were jealous of those whom they considered better informed and better behaved and who were in fact their superiors. Such will form cliques among themselves for the purpose of insulting or annoying you. It is on their part an unconscious acknowledgment of your superiority. Such was the class of passengers we had on board the steamer *Orient*.

To begin with, they were the worst set of petty thieves I ever knew. They very early set to work to rob our four Canadian ponies of their feed. Our bales of hay diminished rapidly and the mangers were robbed.

At last I caught one of them taking the hay from the ponies. I remonstrated with him but he only laughed and made fun of me. The others gathered around and jeered and laughed, told me to go home to my mother. I was told by one to hold my tongue or he would throw me overboard. My young blood was a little stirred at such a threat and I challenged him to try it and sure enough he collared me, expecting I would beg off, when they would have the laugh on me. But he misjudged the Ohio boy. We clinched, and struggling out by the aft gangway near the wheel, it being a side-wheeler, I gave a sudden turn and loosed myself from him and at the same moment planted my fist full and fairly in his face with such energy as my then unpracticed fighting muscle admitted of and he fell back and overboard. I confess I felt a little frightened but the water was not more than three feet deep and when I saw him standing on his feet in the middle of the river, my equanimity was fully restored.

The boat stopped, a skiff was lowered, and the man was soon picked up and brought aboard. His nose was bleeding and he was crestfallen. Knowing that such a class of men are invariably cowards and that even a little swagger will command their respect, I therefore notified his friends who wished to take a bath to avail themselves of my services then and there—adding that it was no unusual thing for me to throw a man or two overboard every morning to give myself an appetite for breakfast. When the captain learned how matters stood, he told them if any more of them were caught stealing and got thrown overboard, he would not stop to pick them up. After this oration from the captain he, turning to me, said: "Come on, youngster, with me and take a drink."

I did not taste strong drink in those days but I thanked the captain and respectfully declined his proffered civility. All this, however, had its influence. The ponies were no more robbed of their provender and, as for my partners and myself, we were treated with civility during the remainder of the trip. It is a lamentably strange peculiarity of mind of this class of people that they will respect you only when they fear you. Trust them and deal gently and kindly with them, as one man should with another, and in return they will insult you, annoy you, and plunder you.

OUR PROGRESS was rather slow as the current of the Missouri changes almost daily and it is impossible for a pilot to know the current from one day to another. Hence we were obliged to tie up every night. Our first stopping place for the discharge of passengers was at Independence where the worst of the lot were let off much to our comfort and relief. On our arrival at St. Joseph we bade farewell to the *Orient* and the remainder of its uncompanionable emigrants. We were much disappointed at the appearance of this then-famous town. It was talked about almost as much as St. Louis both before and after we were on our way to it. Our ideas of its size and importance had been greatly exaggerated but no one could tell us anything definite about it more than I could tell them, which was just nothing at all. It was, however, important in the sense of being the last frontier town on the east bank of the Missouri in the northwest corner of the state.

Old Fort Kearny, about 100 miles up the river and on its west bank, was the only name then known on the map. All the great interior passed under the general name of Nebraska. The great states and territories now familiar to us, carved from that vast region between the upper Missouri and the Rocky Mountains, was but the home of the red man and the range of the buffalo. Most of the houses of St. Joseph were but little temporary huts. There were a few passably good buildings. The population would not exceed 700. There had been many arrivals before us and all were waiting for the grass to grow before launching out upon the plains. Many did not attempt the journey until the first of May.

Our horses having been on board the *Orient* for several days were as pleased as ourselves at once more getting on land and were not long in showing it. One of them, by some carelessness, got away and started out on his own account to take in the town. The other three seeing him enjoying such unwonted freedom became suddenly inspired with the spirit of liberty and broke loose. St. Jo, as the place is always called for short, suddenly advanced from a one-horse town to a four-horse city. The four Canadian ponies created more excitement than the town had ever before been wrought up to. Every man, woman and child were out to lend a hand in catching them but all to no purpose; the ponies were going to have their time out—and they did. When they were through all four deliberately walked into the nearest livery-stable and took their places in vacant stalls. I have often since thought it would be a good way to advertise horses for the dealer to turn his whole stock loose in town and let them show themselves. For certainly no frontier town ever saw a grander sight than those four Canucks with flowing manes, arched necks and expanded nostrils taking in the sights and enjoying the freedom of the infant city of St. Jo. We had half the town at the stables to see the ponies. The offers made for them were without number. One hundred dollars apiece and even much higher. It would have been a good stroke of business if we had sold and gone back to Detroit and bought more, as they cost only forty dollars a head there and fifteen to land them at St. Jo.

After getting what information we could respecting routes and river crossings and making a few purchases, we concluded to pull out and the next day started up the river on the east side for Council Bluffs about 150 miles distant. Our reason for taking this more northern route instead of going directly west was that there were some settlements on that side of the river and we could obtain hay and corn of the farmers much cheaper than at St. Jo. We needed it then as grass had not yet started; besides, the distance was not much, if any, greater than crossing the river at St. Jo and taking the Indian Territory, as it was then called.

Our first day's land journey was uneventful but favorable and we made about twenty-five miles, pitched our tents on the bottomland near a small creek, fed the ponies, cooked our supper, told stories, talked over our plans for the hundredth time, made our bed and turned in as happy as so many bugs in a rug. It was my first experience of genuine camping out. Before I only had knowledge of amateur camping out when a few of us lads would make a night of it in some one of the many great sugar camps around my Ohio home where we would boil sap, "sugar off," and sleep but little. Yet how much happiness was there and real fun for otherwise lonely country boys.

NOW WE had entered upon the nightly necessities of camping in real earnest and we were prepared to enjoy it after our day's journey with the excitements and novelties of our new life, and were soon asleep. We had no premonitory dreams of what we would have to endure before our camping should become history and a memory.

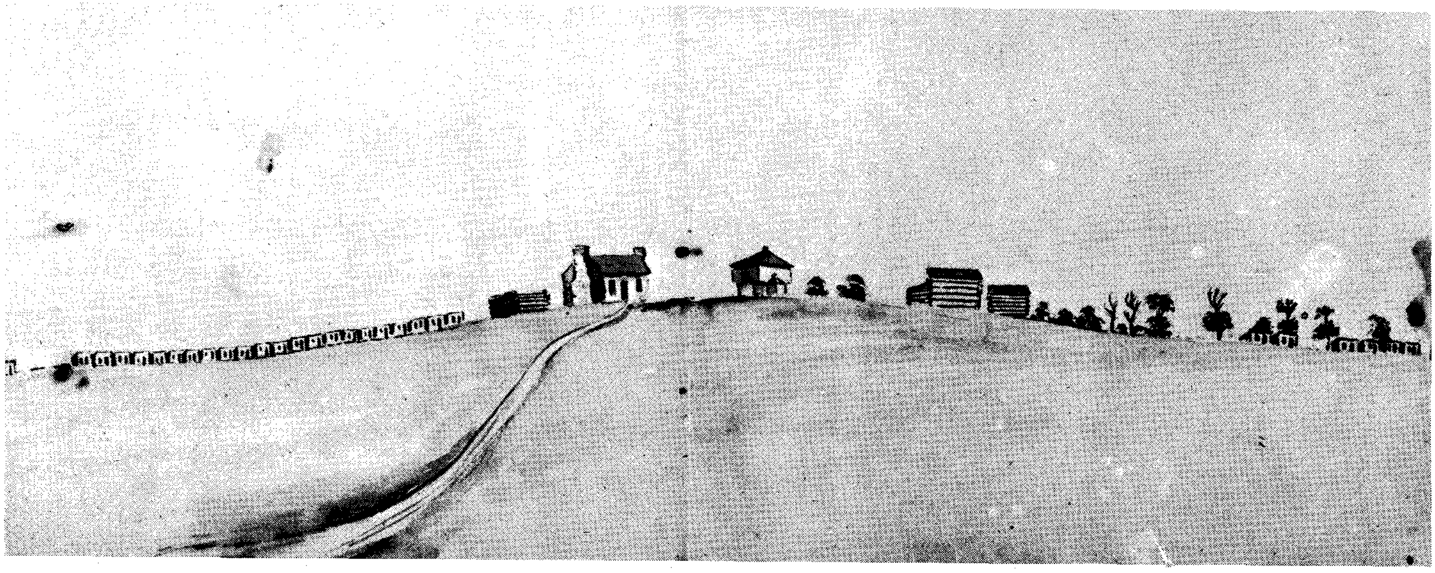
About two o'clock we were awakened by water coming in upon us and into our bed. We were sleeping on the ground. We hastily got ourselves out of our blankets and found that the whole flat was one sheet of water and still rising. Dressing as soon as possible we harnessed the ponies, hitched them to the wagon, and undertook to find high ground. But this was more easily planned than executed. The flat was wide, the night was dark, and just as we were coming to high ground there was a low swale at the foot of the hill with still deeper water into which the ponies plunged and were soon floundering in bogs and mud.

All was dark and in confusion, it rained hard, and all four of us were in the deep and muddy water trying to loosen and extricate the floundering ponies. We finally got out of the slough with the ponies. Morning came at last and showed us a sad and crestfallen party looking out over a dreary waste of water where we had camped but a few hours before.

"This is awful," said one. "I wish I was back home again." However, we soon hitched up and got our wagon out, which we had been compelled to leave in the slough, and pulled out for a farmhouse which we saw about a mile off and where we got a good warm breakfast and plenty of hot coffee—all for the modest sum of ten cents each. Here we spent the whole afternoon drying our clothes and bedding, when we again set out rejoicing but with less exalted notions of camping on creek bottoms.

We arrived on the fourth day at a little town called Lebanon, consisting of a grocery, blacksmith shop, a hay-stack and one man who was the proprietor and manager of the whole business. There were about a dozen people there patronizing the grocery and drinking its bad whiskey. Here we met two men who told us they were camped on the other side of the Missouri waiting for a few more to join them before starting out. We liked the appearance of the men, who said their party consisted of twenty persons and our party added would make the proper complement and urged us to join them. We consented. They said the ferry boat would charge us twenty dollars for crossing with our wagon and four horses but that they had a contract for fifteen dollars and when they went back they would tell the boatman that more of their party were coming and to be ready to take us over in the morning. Sometimes, they said, it took a whole day to cross and much depended on the wind. I it blew up the river they would not cros at all but must wait a calm or revers wind. We promised if the wind wa favorable to be at the river the nex morning.

In the meantime we concluded w



Courtesy Nebraska Historical Society

Old Fort Kearny, Nebraska, in an 1849 drawing by James Wilkinson, overlooked the Missouri River and marked the beginning of the western frontier. The post never was completed and Ferguson's party spent the night of March 31, 1850 in one of the abandoned log buildings. The two-story blockhouse center still stands.

wanted another horse and seeing the men at the grocery store had one that suited us we asked the price. One hundred dollars was the sum asked. We offered seventy-five dollars which they declined. But when they saw we were going to give up the idea of purchasing at their price, their horse-trading thermometer dropped rapidly several degrees until it stood at seventy dollars, when we closed the bargain. The horse was a good one and rather than not have got him we should have given the sum first named. But I was not so young and inexperienced in buying and selling horses in Ohio as not to know the advantages of a little finesse in such negotiations.

We then bought twenty-five bushels of corn of the groceryman and loaded up ready for a start the next morning. When morning came the wind blew down the river and that settled the point. The wind was our weathercock for once. Arriving at the river we found everything in readiness for crossing and the men from the other side were there to help us over. We crossed without accident or delay and went directly up to their camp where we met as fine a party of young men as ever got together. But, poor fellows, little did they know what they would encounter within the next three months. And little did they dream that in nine months every one of them would sleep the long sleep that knows no waking.

OUR NEW CAMP consisted of some abandoned log huts originally built during the Mexican War and was called, I think, Old Fort Kearny. There was a dozen or more of them and our original party took up its quarters in one and stabled our ponies in another. Our new friends had been camping there about a week before our arrival. The following morning being the first of April we broke camp and pulled out on our long and tedious journey. We were all very heavily loaded, principally with horse feed. Some of the boys had two wagons, one being loaded with corn. We expected to find plenty of green grass before a week's time but in that we were doomed to disappointment for the season proved to be much later than usual.

There was at first much doubt about our little Canadian ponies standing the journey with the large American horses, especially such fine ones as the others of our party had, for I think they were the finest lot I ever saw. They had all been selected for the special purpose of crossing the plains. Many had brought them from home and their own farm where they had been raised and where they had fed and groomed them preparatory to this great journey. They looked upon our ponies as poor, little, weak, rural scrubs in comparison to theirs. We felt a little unhappy that they should depreciate our humble team but we had to put up with it, only replying that time would test the comparative merits of the stock. And surely it did for in less than a month there was not a horse in the party but they would have exchanged for the poorest of our ponies. The American horses had always been stabled and groomed and had plenty of the best hay and grain while ours had lived a rough life and never knew stable or grain until we got them. Since then we have taken the best of care of them and had given them all they could eat so they had started on the journey with good heart. A quart of corn a day to ours was as good as four quarts to theirs and when their corn was exhausted we had still a good supply although they had twice as much when we started.

On the second day we camped on Salt Creek where Lincoln, the capital of Nebraska, now stands. We had hardly been located an hour when the camp was thrown into a state of excitement by the approach of a solitary horseman leading two pack mules. He proved to be the mail post rider from Santa Fe. He was surprised on finding we were emigrants and we were delighted at meeting the lonely government official. We spent the evening listening to his relation of hair-breadth escapes and thrilling experiences. He was a good story-teller but whether they were all true or largely imaginary, matters not now. We believed them all then. He warned us to keep a sharp lookout for Indians. The Pawnees, he said, were friendly and we had nothing to fear from them, which we found to be true.

Our visitor had not been gone more than two hours when, having again started, a band of some fifteen or twenty Indians were seen coming down upon us. They rode up within about 200 yards of us and all dismounted in front of us and made signs for us to stop. We obeyed the first signal. They then beat their breasts in token of friendship and advanced toward us. Most of our party had never before seen an Indian, at least a wild one, and it is hardly necessary to remark that they did not wish to see one of them. I had in my boyhood been some months among the Sacs and Fox tribe when they were in Iowa and knew something of their habits, ways and actions; so these were not wholly strange to me.

They came up to us beating their breasts and proffering to shake hands with everyone and seemed very friendly. Some could speak a little English and probably all of them could speak the Sacs and Fox tongue. I had once learned a few words of the latter language but it had now nearly faded from my memory. I thought of a word or two and tossed it to their principal spokesman. He caught it and made demonstrations of delight at having met a white man who could speak such classical Indian. Hearing them talk and watching their gestures brought back to memory many more words and signs of meaning and I soon found I possessed tolerable facilities for social intercourse with the wild man. The Indians for that reason seemed to take a liking to me. I was not a little surprised myself at my success as I was the youngest of the lot and the boy of the party.

I was now inspired with ambition and desired to impress my comrades with my importance an an interpreter of the Indian language and I lost no opportunity of displaying my linguistic accomplishments. My dozen Indian words were a great vocabulary to my companions. They thought me a professor of the Fox language and never discovered how superficial their interpreter was. Henceforth I was deemed an important member of our party and whenever any more Indians came down upon us I was drafted to go to the front.

This band of Indians traveled with us all day and camped near at night. The boys did not like this and I did not quite fancy it but what could we do? We did not want to offend them or appear to doubt their friendly disposition toward us. The next morning the chief said to me that there was plenty of deer a few miles ahead a little off the line of our route, and if I would go with them they would take me to the place. Some thought I had better not go and I did not myself particularly care about it but when I saw that they were afraid, that settled the point with me and go I would and did.

We started out ahead of the train and came to a creek where we dismounted and lay down. We had not been there more than half an hour before seven fine deer made their appearance. I seized my gun and was going to draw a bead on one at considerable distance but they told me to wait and the deer would come nearer to us to drink at the creek, which they did. I pulled the trigger and a fine buck fell. I felt I was growing taller rapidly. By the time the train came up I had him dressed and we all had a feast of venison. The Indian and the white man for once at least dined together and the interpreter sat at the head of the table. The confidence of my companions was greatly increased in me by the outcome of this last doubtful enterprise, and they congratulated themselves in that they had fallen in with a person who so thoroughly understood the language and character of the Indian. At the close of the banquet we parted in peace and friendship. The Indian character had now become somewhat exalted in the estimation of our party; they did not believe it so bad as had been represented. But they little knew what was yet to come.

IT MAY BE of interest as an illustration of the wonderful instincts of the horse, bordering so closely upon reason and intelligence in man, that our little Canucks, as they were now called by all, were very much frightened at the sight of our late indigenous friends and would not suffer an Indian to come near them by night or day and never throughout our long journey became any more reconciled to them than at first—a matter that proved very advantageous to us throughout the journey. An Indian could not come within a mile of us but the Canucks would make it known to us; and if they were out feeding they would make for camp and would not be driven out of it. No watchdog could have been of better service to us in this regard.

The rest of the journey to new Ft. Kearny was uneventful save in the occasional killing of a deer or antelope or the sight of a straggling buffalo which would set the boys wild with excitement, but they deemed it prudent not to exhaust their horses in chasing them, they not being at that early season fit to eat. Besides, the post-rider we had lately met with had told us that beyond Ft. Kearny we would see them in droves of hundreds and thousands. This we thought too tough a story for belief, though we credited all the rest and therein we were not unlike the simple and credulous mother in one of Captain Marryatt's novels, whose boy had been to sea and whose stories and adventures had become her daily consolation and delight. He told her he had seen in the West Indies rivers of rum and mountains of sugar. This was to her a pleasant surprise but she had implicit confidence in her truthful son and only reflected on the happiness of a people so bountifully supplied by nature with the necessities of life. But when he told her he had seen fish fly, the only truth he had told her, she thought he had been tempted by Satan; that certainly was a fish story. Our company could endorse all other tales of the solitary horseman and post-rider but that of the mighty buffalo herds.

On the morning of the eighth day we reached Ft. Kearny. It had just been built, or rather it was then in process of building. One object of the government was a protection and shelter for emigrants, another a station for dragoons that patrolled the road from Fort Laramie to Santa Fe. We found by this time that our horse feed was likely to run out as grass had not yet started, but the commissary could furnish us no provender except enough flour for ourselves to carry us to Fort Laramie on the north fork of the Platte River about 400 miles. Our purchase of flour was to the extent of some fifty pounds to a man—for about three dollars per hundred pounds cheaper than our purchase at St. Jo.

The morning we left the Missouri River a man started out with a wheelbarrow to cross the plains. He had a bushel of parched corn, his blankets, and nothing else. He wheeled it manfully for several days but the speed kept up was too great for him and he gave out. We took him up and carried him on to Fort Kearny where the government gave him employment at twenty-five dollars per month. There we left him and I have never heard of him since. I have several times heard of a man crossing the continent with a wheelbarrow but I don't believe it was ever accomplished. This man, I am sure, could have performed the feat if anyone could. He had all the advantages of youth, strength, courage and will, but I think the enterprise beyond human endurance. There are so many sand dunes, some extending for many miles, so many rivers to cross, besides deep and terrible gorges to traverse, and two ranges of mighty mountains to ascend and descend that it seems to me impossible. Be it as it may, this man started—and that is all I know of him or his wheelbarrow.

WE LEFT Fort Kearny the next day after our arrival there, it being the ninth day of April, having made 280 miles in eight days. The buffaloes were daily getting more plentiful, so much so that we were several times compelled to stop our train to let a herd pass. I really believe I have seen herds five miles long. I won't make it any longer for fear I may be thought trying to go one better on the statement of the Santa Fe post-rider.

On the fourteenth when we were near the junction of the North and South Platte there came on a snowstorm in the night of about a foot in depth. In the morning the wind rose strong, fierce and cold—a regular blizzard—which continued three days. The snow covered the buffalo chips so we could not get them to make a fire and if we could have got them they were so saturated they would not have burned.

We formed a corral with the wagons by hauling them as close together as possible, running the pole of the hind wagon under the forward one and so on, and then huddled the horses inside as close as they could stand. Our corn was getting low and we had to use our flour mixed with corn. We could do without flour ourselves for we could get plenty of meat of all kinds; so we fed the flour to the horses without any fear for ourselves. We burnt three wagons to keep from perishing. Never in my experience did I pass three such terrible days and I hope never to be called to endure the like again. The fourth day came off pleasant but the snow had drifted so that traveling was almost impossible. As the sun shone bright we were bound to leave the place where we had suffered so much. The bright sunshine on the snow blinded our eyes and blistered our faces. Some may doubt about our faces being blistered by the snow but it is a fact nevertheless.

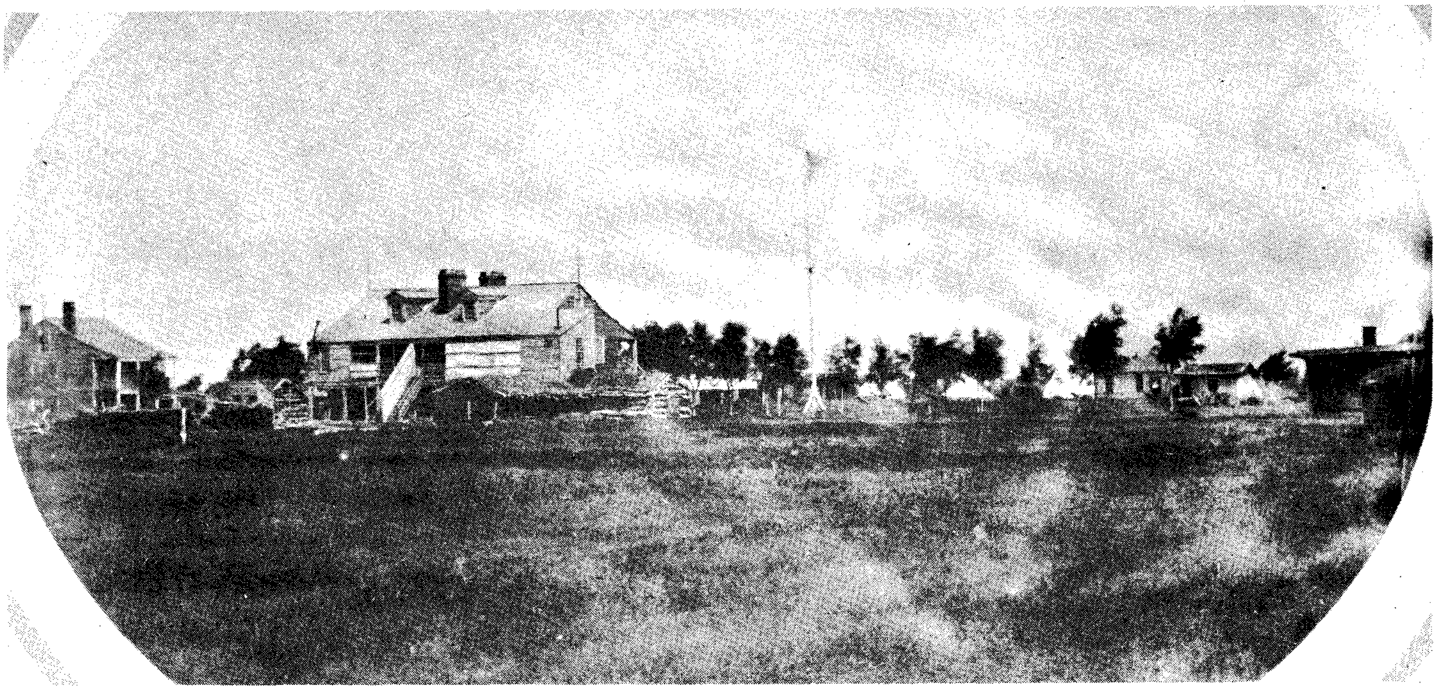
Our progress was very slow through the snowdrifts and we camped early in the day near an island in the South Platte where there was an abundance of wood, made a good fire and cooked a warm meal, which we had not had for four days, and felt better. It was getting late in the season, especially for such a storm; but now the sun shone clearly and warm, the snow was fast disappearing, and what was better still, our hopes of green grass soon starting put us all once more in cheerful spirits.

We had some fears about being able to cross the two rivers, South and North Platte, and knowing we were close approaching the first it was thought best that some of the party should go ahead and select a crossing place. I was one of three selected to go on this service on account of my supposed influence with all Indian tribes we might meet with, having already had some success with the Pawnees. When we were about twenty-five miles in advance of the train we fell in with a small band of Pawnees, for we were not yet out of their territory. We were surprised to find that they knew of our coming and were on the lookout for us.

They told us the regular crossing was about twenty miles from there up the river but that as the river was rising rapidly it would be too high by the time the train would arrive there; so they took us back about six miles and showed us a crossing which they said was better than the one above. They took us across and showed us how we must take advantage of the sand bars. They were friendly and of great service to us. They warned us to beware of the Sioux as they were very mean and would lie and steal. We found afterwards that they had told us the truth, in the latter respect certainly, for a bigger set of thieves no one ever fell in with. They told us never to attempt to go straight across a stream but strike a current and follow it up or down and so on until we reached the opposite bank. They took us across and showed us how to do it. For this service we gave them sugar with which they were highly pleased.

Their time seemed to be of no object to them and so they stayed with us that night, a thing which we did not much admire, although they had not showed any tendency to steal; yet we had not the most implicit faith in their honesty and kept a sharp lookout for them. The next day the train came up and we set about crossing the stream. The river was at this point, we judged, over half a mile wide but the course of the different currents we had to follow up and down made the journey from side to side nearly two miles. This had to be done with four and six horses and a man to each wheel. Sometimes all the horses would break through the crust of sand formed by the pressure of the current running over it, and all would go down as soon as they began to plunge. Our only way was to unhitch, draw them down onto another hard crust in the current below, and all hands man the wagons and drag them out.

Sometimes the wagons would be left standing so long the water would wash the crust away from the wheels and



Courtesy Nebraska Historical Society

New Fort Kearny on the Platte in central Nebraska in 1858. Fort construction was in progress when Ferguson stopped here in 1850. Photo is back view of commanding officer's quarters and parade ground.

down they would go and we would have to unload and carry everything to a sand bar, then take the wheels off and float the box down, put the vehicle together again, load up, and make another start, only to meet with a similar mishap. The only way was, when once started, to keep moving as long as possible. Every man of us was in water from morning till night and must have traveled in the three days of crossing ten miles in water up to his waist for nearly every team required the whole force in its transit. But everything has an end and so did the crossing of the South Platte River.

After a tedious labor of just three days we camped out in the Ogalalla about 500 yards from the river to avoid mosquitoes which were terribly annoying nights and mornings. One would hardly believe this possible only five days after a severe snowstorm; nevertheless it was so. The weather had come off warm and we had now high hopes of grass as it had already begun to sprout.

I HAVE OFTEN been asked if the country along the Platte produced grass at that time. I do not think it did so much as now. There was plenty of dry grass when we came along showing that the year before there had been a good growth. The impression prevailed for a time that this region of country produced but little or none but this resulted from the enormous amount of emigration that followed us which kept he grass cut down so close that the land was thought to be barren.

Almost everyone at that time was unavorably impressed with that region of ountry, and I thought then if the govrnment would offer me a patent of ll the land we traversed between Fort Kearny and Fort Laramie I would not ccept it; yet hundreds of miles of the ame land has since proved to be of the ery best quality for both grazing and griculture. The fact that the region bounded with buffalo at the time we assed was proof that it was a good ange for mighty herds and the game we illed was very fat; besides the Indians were there with plenty of horses, all of which looked well for that season of the year.

Why should not grass have grown then as well as now (1887)—for the country along the North and South Platte is in a high state of cultivation. The very place where we crossed the South Platte boasts of a town only three years old, Ogalalla, the county-seat of Keith County, western Nebraska, bordering upon the northeast corner of Colorado. Its population exceeds 1,000. It has two banks, three hotels, three dry goods stores, groceries, furniture houses, a seventy barrel flour mill, and restaurants too numerous to mention. The population of the county is over 400 and the country for miles around is equal to any in the East. So one can see that the opinion of many early emigrants was incorrect touching the value of the land.

Ogalalla is the westernmost station but one on the Union Pacific Railroad in Nebraska. And here, near the scene of his first sad experience in crossing the continent and after thirty-five years of varied fortunes by land and sea, the narrator has pitched his tent for life among a generous, industrious and enterprising people. Where even but a few short years since, there was but the trail of the buffalo, the Indian and the gold hunter, and calls the goodly town his home.

FROM THE SOUTH Platte where we crossed to the North Platte is about seven miles but we took a western course and did not strike the latter river until we had traveled about fourteen miles. We continued on some distance to a point shown on the map as Ash Hollow on account of some small ash trees growing in the ravines near the place of crossing. We tried it by sending over some of the men on horseback who reported favorably.

We camped there on the south bank that night and made an early start in the morning, sending over our wagons with boxes and beds all made watertight and fastened down to the running gear and two strong cords fore and aft with four men holding the ropes from the upper side of the stream. This we found answered well and soon we had two teams crossing over at the same time and in the course of the day had them all on the other side of the river without a single accident. And so the stream which we had most dreaded proved the one that gave us the least trouble.

We were now in high spirits, thinking we were over the worst of it. It is best perhaps that nature has ordained the future to be closely veiled from the human mind. True, we had met thus far none but friendly Indians—we did not want to. We were like the man who was asked to go out in advance as a scout in search of Indians that had been committing some depredations. "No," said he, "I have lost no Indians and I don't want to find any."

We had not come out into that wilderness in search of the red man although we kept a sharp lookout for him. Not a night passed but we stationed two men on sentry, relieving them at twelve o'clock and putting on two more till morning. The weather was getting warm but the grass did not seem to grow. There was however, an abundance of old grass which seemed to be much better than on the South Platte.

We now came to a place called Court-House Rock. The rock stood about seven miles off our line of travel but was a conspicuous object. Some of the party got badly sold in starting on foot to inspect it, thinking it only about a mile distant. After walking an hour and finding it still apparently as far as when they started, they gave it up while others on horseback reached it.

It is a high rock in the middle of a great plain, apparently on an artificial mound. The earth gradually sloping from it on every side, it has the appearance from the road where we first saw it of a mammoth courthouse, but when approached it bore no such resemblance. From base to summit it is 400 feet.

Chimney Rock is something over 350 feet high and has the appearance at a distance of an old, dilapidated chimney.

I went to see that and climbed to the top. When at the top and as the sun was about to drop below the horizon I could see our camp many miles distant in the plain, the men cooking supper, the horses grazing, and what was most strange to my vision, the men looked like toddling children and the horses not more than a foot high; yet all could be seen as plain and distinct as if they had been within 200 yards while in fact they were seven or eight miles away. It took me over two hours of rapid walking to reach camp.

The day after visiting Chimney Rock, about ten in the morning we were surprised by a band of Crow Indians who came riding down from the northern hills at full speed. There must have been seventy-five or eighty of them. They came within about 400 yards of us, then suddenly wheeled their horses and rode around us two or three times at the same time going through many of their warlike motions, drawing their bows as if to send an arrow. Some would ride down furiously close to us as if they were going straight through us, then suddenly turn and ride back turning in their saddles and feigning to shoot and finally returning to their party which had been watching their movements with apparently as much interest as we had been, which was not a little.

We expected an attack and closed up our teams as close as possible but still kept on the move. The men all examined their rifles and pistols. It was my turn to drive that day. We had a Scotchman who came to me, holding his head with both hands.

"O, Charlie," said he, "I am so sick."

"Are you?" said I, "then get up here and drive."

I was as glad to get down as he was to get up as I knew if the train was attacked the driver would be picked off first. I had not been down five minutes before I saw our train apparently without a driver. I ran around thinking George was really sick and had keeled over but found he had made a hole among the bags and boxes just big enough to crawl into leaving his head only just high enough to see the horses. Frightened as I was myself I could not help but laugh. I knew he was a consummate coward but I had given him credit for too much pride to let it be known.

The Indians had now been at least half an hour going through their performances, only stopping to let their horses blow and then start afresh, we still moving on. At last one more daring than the rest came down on us and went through a like performance, wheeling and pretending to shoot.

There was a young fellow in our company named James Pierson, a daring spirit as ever lived and as good a fellow as he was fearless, who had a splendid riding horse three-quarters bred that could run like a deer for which my pony was no match. But I went to Jim and said, "If that redskin tries that game again, and you will cut him off from the rest, I will ride in and down him."

"All right," said Jim.

Presently down came the brave again, this time a little nearer. "Come on, Charlie," said Jim and away we went. I heard our boys calling to us to come back, George's voice above the rest. He had got over the headache. The Indian saw us coming and tried his best to reach his party but Jim's horse was too fleet for the Indian's pony and headed him off. He turned only to meet me with my pistol on him within a hundred feet. He dropped his bow, pulled in his horse and began beating his breast. With our prisoner between us we rode proudly into camp.

When the other Indians saw we had the man they got off their horses and down upon their knees, beat their breasts and made signs for us to come up to them. We stopped the train and went out to meet them. They professed friendship, pulled out the pipe, got into a line, and asked us to give up our prisoner, which we did. Then we all took a whiff from the pipe, they all the while beating and pounding away on their chests.

Jim and myself they complimented with titles such as "Big Warrior," "Big Man," but when driver Scotch George came to have his pull at the pipe they said, "Squaw, no good," and refused him the pipe and turning to me said, "Coolah (boy), no squaw." So they had noticed George's taking the place of the driver and hiding in the wagon. Poor George was rather crestfallen for he had been a great brag always telling what he would do in case of an engagement. He never so long as I knew him recovered from the Indian christening of "Squaw."

WHEN THE prisoner had been surrendered and the treaty of peace negotiated, trade and commerce succeeded and traffic began. They were ready to swap anything for sugar. They had an American horse—one I suppose they had borrowed the year before from the Mormons as they passed along. He was a fine upstanding animal but very poor, and his hair was long and rough. At first look one would not give five dollars for him. I wanted to buy him but did not know what to give or what to offer in exchange. They wanted sugar—I offered them money—"no good," they said. Sugar and whiskey were legal tender. I was bound to have the horse and as I had not used my share of our stock of sugar and felt rich in the supposed possession of a quart of brandy—my share of the gallon, never having tasted it, I supposed it all in the jug—I was prepared to trade. George earnestly remonstrated against my parting with the brandy; we would want it for sickness he said. Both the other men were willing so I agreed to give a pint of sugar and a pint of whiskey. George interposed a final objection—if I treated the Indians they would follow us and steal the horse back and more with him. But it was of no use and the boys all said they would stand extra guard for a few nights and that settled it.

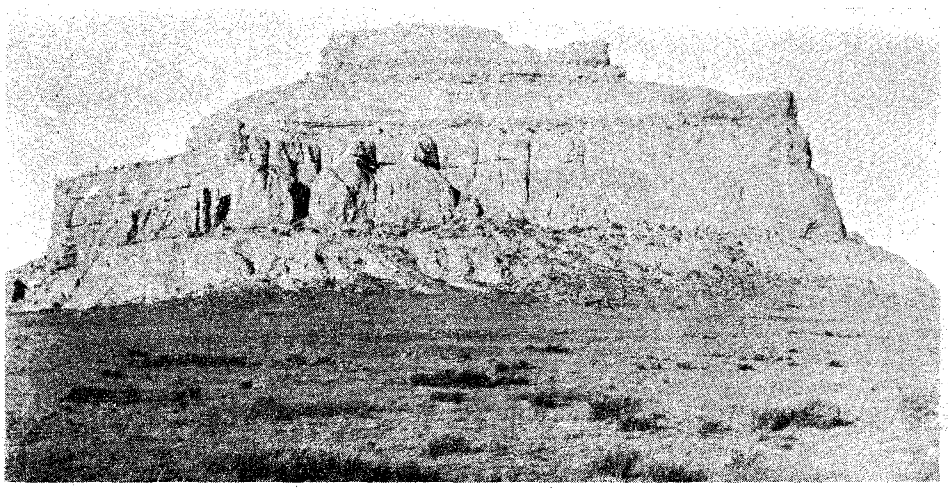
I took an empty vinegar bottle, put in about one-third water, got out the gallon jug of brandy that no one had yet tasted and filled a pint cup. Judge our surprise when we found it had been exhausted and watered till it was about the strength and color of pale sherry! But no one was more surprised than Scotch George himself. He charged it upon some of the other boys; but it was of no use for the cat was out of the bag. His strenuous objection to the trade was the dread of the brandy exposure. He was crestfallen but did not reform for when some days afterwards a little brandy was needed the jug was empty. Thus ended the Crow war.

Among the less weightier transactions was the exchange of an old blue woolen shirt that I had worn from the frontier for a suit of buckskin shirt and pants with strips two or three inches in length along the seams. It was a fine and attractive costume when new and the weather was dry, but when the pants got wet, the legs elongated and from time to time had to be amputated a few inches—the same with the sleeves of the shirt. Soon, however, when the weather became dry and warm the legs of the pants withdrew to a point above my knees and the sleeves of the shirt could not be coaxed down below my elbows. I never afterwards aspired to Indian fashions or patronized the redskin tailor

Our corn and flour were nearly exhausted and we had used none of the latter ourselves. We had hopes of buying some at Laramie and were bound to make all speed for that place. We were now 2 days out and had made over 500 mile notwithstanding hindrances by storm an the crossing of two rivers and had advanced about 200 miles from where w crossed.

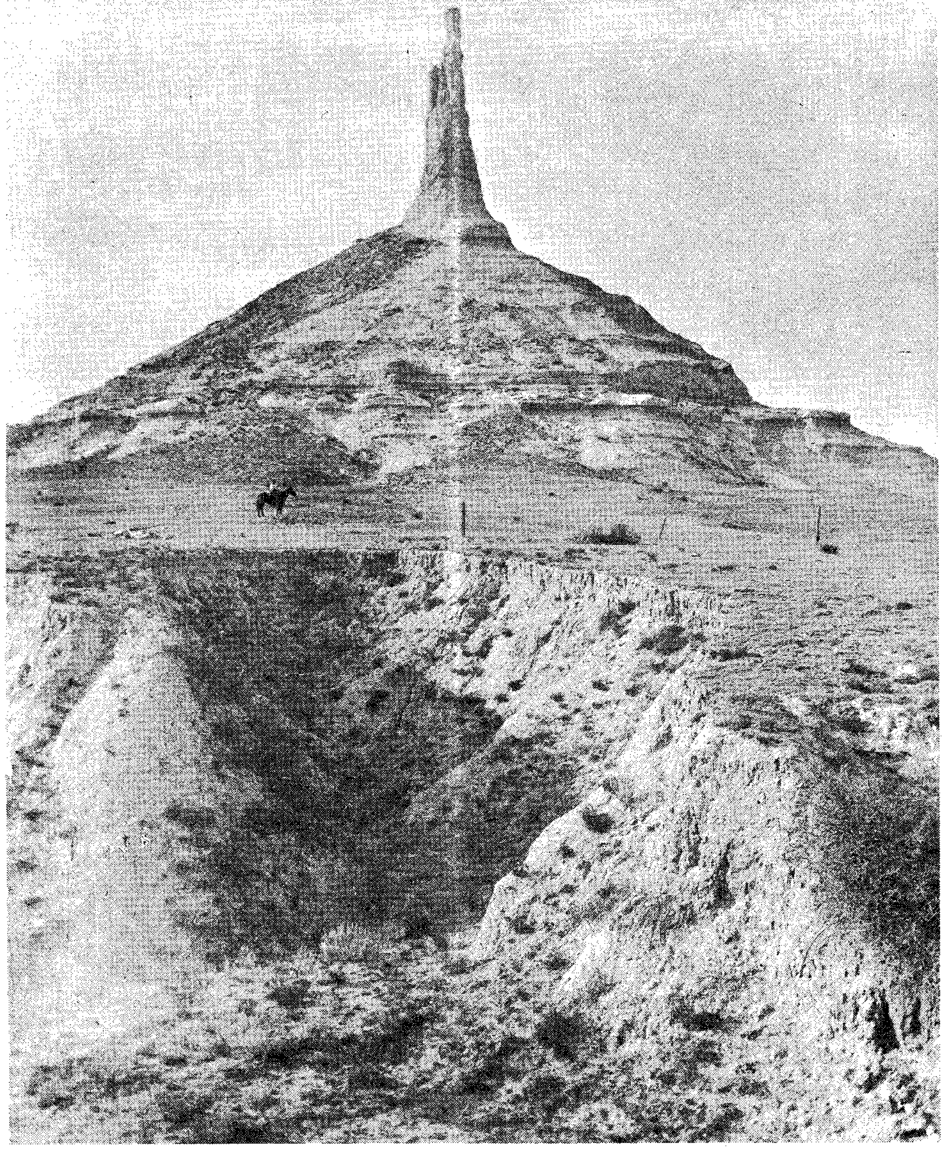
At night around our campfires ou experiences were rehearsed and our plan laid for the next day. We had plenty o meat and if we were out all one had t do was to go outside the camp a sho distance and kill as many antelope a he wanted; and as for buffalo they wer a troublesome nuisance, often stoppin the train till the herd passed. We coul shoot into a herd when passing and dro a young heifer or two, dress them, tak what we wanted, and leave the rest spoil—spoil, that was almost impossibl Meat would keep for weeks even in h weather. A hard shell would form ove the outside and keep the inside fresh ar sweet for an incredible length of time.

We were now traveling over thirt miles a day on the average toward Lar mie. The roads were good, no rivers



Ferguson's group passed within seven miles of Court House Rock in western Nebraska.

Courtesy Nebraska Historical Society



Courtesy Nebraska Historical Society

After making camp one afternoon in April 1850, Ferguson walked two hours across the plain to climb Chimney Rock near the North Platte.

cross, and nothing to detain. It was too ate in the season to expect any more torms especially such as we had experienced; the land was rolling and not nountainous. We met with but one band f Indians—Sioux, about twenty in numer. They rode around us and finally lismounted and one of them exhibited a paper and offered it to us to read. The ocument had been written by some white nan stating that they were friendly isposed. They wished to traffic with s. We swapped some old undergarments, ow useless to us but prized by them, for noccasins and trinkets alike useless to s. They were pleased with their good bargain and rode along with us for a few niles and they left us beating their reasts in token of friendship. We arived at Fort Laramie on the twentyinth of April, having made a journey f a little over 700 miles in twenty-nine ays.

THIS interior fort was built the year before for the protection of emirants and the convenience of the draoons that patrol the road between Fort Hall in Oregon and Fort Leavenworth, Kansas, so we were told by the officer n command. It was built on a vast plain n the midst of thousands of acres of actuses growing so rank and thick that t was impossible to approach except by he road. Thus it was in no danger of being surrounded and surprised by Indians for they could only gain access by the road where a single charge of grape or canister would cut a wide swath in their ranks. The fort possessed two cannon of ample calibre on wheels, which were a curiosity to many interior Indians who visited the fort. They looked into the muzzle and walked around it treading lightly, but when it was suddenly and to them unexpectedly discharged they ran for their lives and did not return for a long time, and when they did they approached cautiously and asked if the "shooting-wagons" were loaded. When told they were, the Indians left saying, "Shooting-wagons no good."

The soldiers told us some pretty tough yarns about their encounters with the Sioux and Crows—some were true and others perhaps doubtful—but we took them all in. They had the effect at least to make us keep a sharp lookout, to be on our guard, and in that respect they were harmless.

As we were out of flour the commissary told us we could have it at cost to the government, including the freightage which was sixteen dollars a hundred pounds. We were willing to pay that price but were disappointed when he would let us have but fifty pounds per man. We worked him a little. One party would go and get two hundred pounds for his party, then the same party would send another man and get the same amount but soon he discovered our scheme and would not let us have any more unless all hands in the party came together. We could not ring in on him the second time but he took it all in good part.

We remained there and rested our team for two days. We left on the second day of May just about the time we should have left the Missouri River. Before we started news came in from the Black Hills brought by the Crows. Little and unimportant news is wonderfully refreshing to those who have been shut up in the interior of the continent for a month and there is no end to the number of simple questions we all asked the gentlemanly Crows. I have since wondered they did not get impatient with us, but they seemed to like it and regarded themselves as of great importance in consequence.

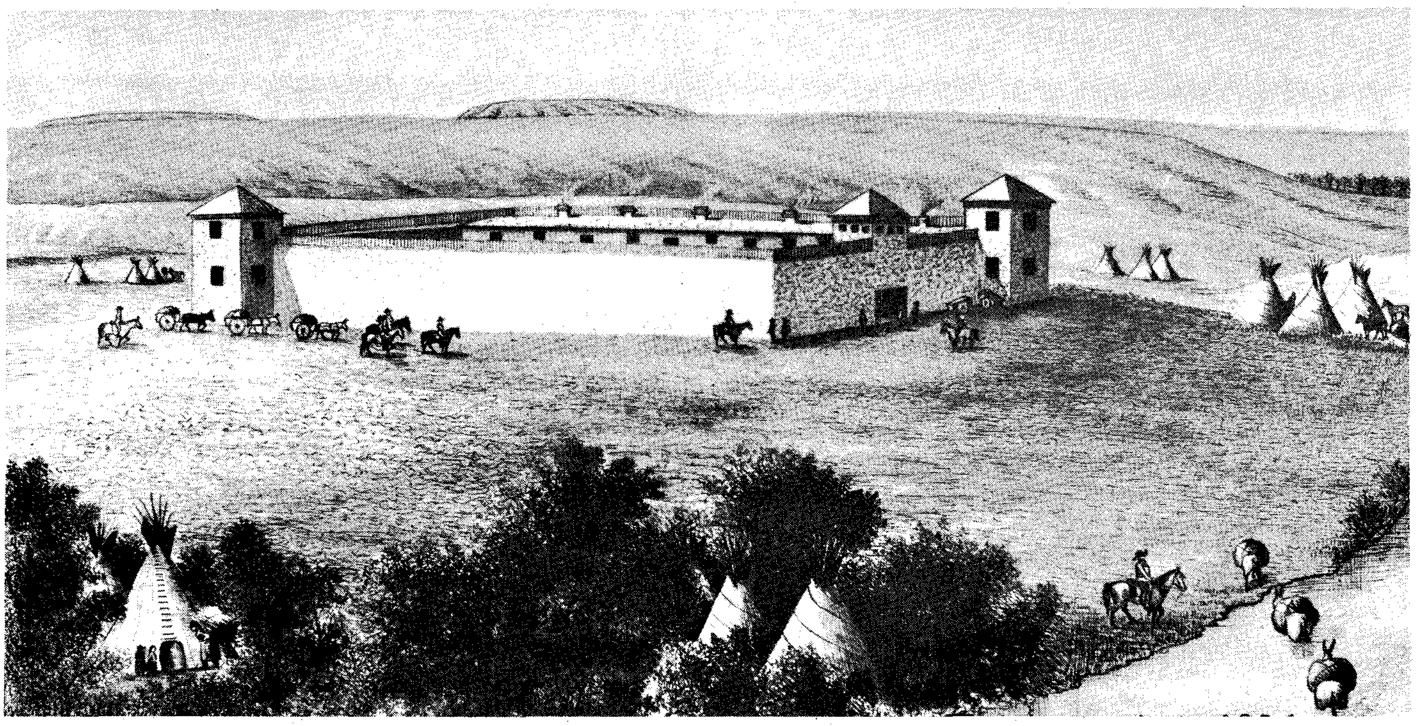
While we were at Laramie we learned that a few days before our arrival a soldier had stolen the colonel's horse and struck out for California. It was a valuable one, worth about $175. We thought it strange the colonel did not have him pursued but he said, "Let him go, it won't be long before he will be back."

When we had camped on the evening of the second day out from Laramie we saw at some distance a solitary horseman coming on a little diminutive brute of a horse. We watched him for some time totally befogged as to who or what he was. He didn't look like an Indian although he had a buffalo robe around him. The mystery was solved when he rode up and got off—it was a white man. Except for the buffalo robe he was as naked as when he was born. He proved to be the soldier that had stolen the colonel's horse. He had rode him, he said, about a hundred miles the first twenty-four hours and tied up for a few hours to give him a rest and again started and rode him until the next night when a band of Crows came down on him and took his provisions, every stitch of his clothing, and his horse, saddle and bridle. They gave him the buffalo rug, some jerked buffalo meat and the poorest pony they had and told him to go back. This with the Crow is not deemed robbing or stealing but a pure business transaction not unlike in a humbler degree, a modern Wall Street operation—though in the latter instance the winning party rarely contributes even a blanket to cover the nakedness of the party fleeced. The Crows call it swapping. They say the Sioux are mean and will steal—but Crows, "they good Indian, they swap." When they swap they are pretty sure to get the best of the bargain, especially when they have the opportunity to corner the market as they did when they dealt with the Laramie soldier.

We fell in with several parties of Sioux and found they had not been misrepresented about their pilfering qualities—in fact they would rob. They would rush and snatch the food we were cooking if one would allow them. They were what is called awful bouncers if they thought one was the least afraid of them. One of them tried his little game on me but it did not pan out as he had expected. I was cooking some pancakes in a frying pan. He came up to me saying in a bouncing and swaggering way, "Give me."

I shook my head and said, "No."

"Yes," said he and grabbed at those on the tin plate. They fell to the ground. As he stooped to pick them up I struck



Courtesy Wyoming Historical Department

Fort Laramie, Wyoming about 1836. Ferguson's party arrived here April 29, 1850.

him over the head with the hot frying pan and knocked him sprawling, the grease in the pan flying all over his head and face. He got up and went off, shaking his head in burning pain and muttering terrible anathemas on me I suppose—certainly they were not prayers or blessings as I judged from the expression of his countenance. It was all the same to me however. Whether curses or prayers I never felt damaged or benefited from them. The boys were afraid that my rash act would call down the vengeance of the whole tribe but instead of that the others seemed to enjoy the joke for they laughed at him and he appeared to be ashamed. He did not, however, attempt to help himself to any more pancakes.

WE WERE NOW getting among . . . a long range of bold mountains, now and then sending down small streams. The hills were of a slippery or soapy nature and the wagons would slip and slide, particularly if the road was the least sidling. In many places it required the greatest care and we were compelled to let the wagons down with ropes fastened to the upper side, all hands manning the ropes and getting them over one at a time, making pretty laborious work.

The hills were literally swarming with deer, antelope and elk, the latter the first we had seen. The game did not seem to be afraid, especially the antelope. I went out one morning not more than 400 yards from the camp and shot seven, all within fifty yards of the place where I shot the first one. The deer were of the blacktail kind and not so large as our eastern deer. There were also some mountain goats but they were very shy and kept beyond shooting distance. They seemed to recognize the rule my father inculcated when I was a child and got in his way when he would say, "Stand back, you can see just as well."

At a place they called La Bonte Creek the multitude of game surpassed all I had ever yet seen. Here we fell in with a party of Canadian-French trappers and fur dealers. They had four wagons loaded with bales of fur bound for St. Jo. A few could speak very indifferent English but the larger number only French. They said they had been from the frontier twelve months and that for the last six months had lived solely on jerked buffalo meat and coffee never in that time having even seen bread or flour. Jerked meat is cut in long slips about a quarter of an inch thick and dried over a slow fire or hung in the sun four or five days when it is put away for use. It is boiled as meat or used dry in place of bread. It is very good for a hungry man and tastes fairly good but will never become popular as a dainty dish among the epicures of Delmonico's.

In 1865, sixteen years afterwards, I met one of the same party, Canadian Jo, as we called him, in Australia. He knew me and told me where he had seen me. I noticed his English had not improved much in all that length of time. Coincidences in life are often many and sometimes quite surprising and such I deem this one.

We next came to Independence Rock—so named it was said by some by Colonel Fremont who stopped there one Fourth of July—by others who say because it stands out on the plains away from any other eminence. It is one solid, grand boulder—probably the largest in the world, covering at least 10 acres of ground and is between 200 and 300 feet high. Whatever the origin of its name the rock is there with many thousand names of visitors inscribed thereon, some with chisel and others with paint. I undertook to chisel my name there but soon became discouraged and gave it up. We remained a day and rested our horses which had begun to fag and were falling away and getting weaker from want of green grass.

Resting upon the ground on the sunny side of the mighty boulder, a boy of seventeen, unlettered and unread, to whom geology was a term almost unknown and the theory of the Ice Age not yet developed, instinct alone prompted the mind to contemplation—to questions unanswerable—as the one invariably propounded by the child when told by his mother who made him—"Who made God?" Whence came this loose, separate, independent boulder rock—mightiest of the mightiest—in the center of this vast green and grassy plain on the roof of the continent, miles away from all others

"Crags, knolls and mounds, confus'dly
hurled
The fragments of an earlier world"?

As the finite cannot comprehend the infinite, so I was left to ponder upon the incomprehensible mystery even unto this day of the genesis and history of Independence Rock.

The Sweetwater River is close by the rock. It is about 150 feet wide and we crossed it on snow that had slid down in an avalanche, completely burying it. The snow had frozen on the top, forming a crust capable of bearing our horses and wagons. A short distance from where we crossed there was a crack in the snow that enabled us to see the river running beneath. We let down a rope to the water, which on measuring we found to be twenty-four feet from the surface of the snow. It was a perfectly safe bridge for mules. The stream forces itself through a split mountain. The rif is not more than 200 yards wide and th rocky walls rise over 300 feet above th water. It is a fearfully grand sight t look down in the chasm where the wate rushes, dashing against the boulders an forming foam and spray almost equa to Niagara Falls. It is called the Devil' Gate. I do not wish to pass an opinio upon the appropriateness of the nam but I feel pretty sure that if one entere the gate he would soon be launched int the presence of his Satanic Majesty o landed in the realms of bliss.

WE WERE NOW approaching wha was called the South Pass or th summit of the Rocky Mountains wher the waters divide, one making for th Pacific, the other the Atlantic. We wer within twenty miles of the summit an many were our speculations concernin its topographical appearance. Som thought it would be a great mountain t ascend and descend but all were agree ably disappointed when we found it wa a gradual and hardly perceptible ascen to a point where for the first time w aw water running in a westerly course. Ve thought concerning the summit something akin to the Irishman on board hip about to cross the equatorial line or which he had kept a sharp lookout ut did not see and who when asked bout his experience when crossing the ne said, "Devil dam of a line did I ee."

The country now for about eighteen iiles on was as level as a house floor nd about twenty miles wide from hills o hills when we came to a fork in the oads, or rather trails, to a place called ublette's Cut-off, one leading northrest toward Oregon, the other a little outh of west which went directly to Salt ake City and the Mormons. After much onsideration and discussion it was put o a vote and the latter route carried, lthough it was a diversion of some 200 iiles from the direct route. The object ras to rest and replenish our stock of rovisions. After passing the summit he grass gradually improved and being iixed with the old did not hurt but reatly strengthened our poor and reakened horses for they got about equal mounts of each. We were in good spirits, eeling that we were on the last half of ur journey, and began to think our reatest troubles over. There was a general rejoicing in camp that night—story elling and song singing. Conviviality is wonderful cure for past afflictions.

Our next place of note was the crossng of Green River—that wonderful entral continental stream which has its ource near Yellowstone National Park nd the fountainhead of the Missouri and mpties into the Colorado as the Misouri does into the Mississippi. When we rove down to the river we were surrised to find a band of at least 200 hoshone Indians camped on the western ank. It was late in the afternoon and it rould take till dark to cross and then re would be compelled to camp among his strange tribe, an idea that was not leasant to contemplate. We concluded o camp where we were and commenced o turn out our horses.

We had hardly let them loose when ome of the tribe came over to us and ave us to understand that we must cross iat night for in the morning, they said, ie river would be too high to cross. At rst we thought it was a scheme of theirs get us among them and rob us in the ight. Upon further consideration we iought if their purpose was to rob us ie river was no hindrance to them so e concluded to cross. The whole band irned to lend a hand in crossing. "Many ands make light work," and so it was this instance, at least it made quick ork.

The Indians worked manfully and I on't think we were over two hours in ossing the now-famous river. They all emed to be very friendly and the only atter they bothered us about was their treme anxiety to trade. For the most orthless article we had they were ady to swap something equally valuess to us. We satisfied them pretty well r their services, which had been valule to us. In the morning we found as ey had told us, the river swollen bank bank and which would have caused us eat trouble and loss of time had we not ken their advice.

HEY TOOK every means to amuse us, even to getting up a horse race d inviting us to enter our ponies and ooded stock and compete with them for e royal redskin "cup." We explained at our horses were all handicapped by hard service and sharp bones and could not compete at the Indian "Derby" with the racers of the Shoshone Nation on the banks of Green River. They intimated that we were altogether too modest in our claims by pointing out, as a worthy horse to enter, Jim Pierson's "Dexter"—the same with which he had clipped the wings of the Crow. They are, generally speaking, good judges of a horse.

The next morning when we started they struck their tents and traveled all day with us and there were many amusing scenes in the cavalcade. Ponies were packed so one could see only a big bundle of traps moving; another pony carried a big basket on each side with three or four little Indians in each; still another wee bit of a pony would stagger under the weight of two and sometimes three robust and heavy buck Indians. The men all rode while the squaws were on foot and most of them staggering under a heavy load. Chivalry seemed to have been but partially developed among the Indian tribes, for while the men went in quest of adventure and reveled in jousts and bouts they seemed to have no lady-love to protect or whose approbation they considered worthy to win.

The Indian woman is a beast of burden and a slave. Civilized man is more kindly and generous towards woman. He lets her do as she pleases—perhaps he can't help himself—pays her dry goods bill or fails; lets her have her own separate property, and his own too when he wants to keep it from her creditors; indulges her in occasional hours of relaxation by holding the baby. In fact he debars her of no rights which he himself enjoys, saving the right to vote and to "speak in meeting"—which last even Paul would not allow. They camped with us the second night and in the morning left us, manifesting the strongest tokens of friendship. Since we had passed the summit our road had been changeable with many small mountain streams to cross, one of which was so serpentine that we crossed it twenty-seven times. The snow was rapidly melting and every little stream was swollen to full bank. There was a place on our route called Steamboat Spring Valley, containing certain very active hot springs whose intermittent puffs of steam could be seen at a great distance and which seemed wonderfully like an approaching steamboat. Upon arriving at the place several springs were found puffing away—all more or less hot—one in particular certainly near the boiling point. It would bubble and boil at the surface for a minute or so and belch forth to the height of two or three feet, then subside for two or three minutes and repeat the process. It was at least a vivid reminder of the story of the Dutchman and his son who in crossing the country had camped near a hot spring; but all innocent of such wonderful phenomena, he started out to get a refreshing drink while his son was unyoking the oxen. He got down on his knees but took in, instead of cold a mouthful of hot water. Ejecting it quicker than he had sipped it he told Hans to yoke up the oxen quick—saying, "Hell is one mile from this place, sure." Often within a few rods or even feet of one of these hot springs, there will be a spring of ice cold water.

Game was getting scarcer very fast after crossing the summit, only a few antelope and deer, no mountain goats, no elk, nor jack rabbits, which perhaps I have not before mentioned but which bear a strong resemblance to the English hare. There is also a sage hen, something like the partridge or the New Zealand hen. They are a fine-looking bird but when cooked they are not eatable, being so strongly tainted with the wild sage brush which is their sole subsistence. The wild sage is mostly found on barren land and the Laramie country produced the most extensive fields of it.

As for the Indians, I found the Pawnees the best tribe, the Shoshones the next, but to take their word each tribe was good but their neighbors were represented as all liars and thieves. The Sioux had the worst name among emigrants. All tribes I ever talked with said the Crows would rob or "swap" as they called it. But of all tribes that we had met with thus far, the Shoshones did not steal from us. Nevertheless all Indians are at least notorious vagabonds and beggars.

WHILE THE DAYS were warm, the nights were now very cold and we suffered much, for we were wet during the day in crossing streams and lay in wet blankets at night, not one of us having a stitch of dry bedding. We were however happy in one thing and that was the food was good and our horses were improving every day. I never before saw grass that horses would fatten on in so short a time and do so much work as they did on this western prairie grass; nor did I ever see old last year's grass that had the substance in it like this in and around the Rocky Mountains. The reason is there is not so much rain and the grass cures before frost comes; the substance and sweetness is dried into it instead of being dried out of it.

Now we had come to Ft. Bridger, which now after thirty-eight years is shown upon the map as being in the southwest corner of Wyoming close to the border of Utah. It was named after the man who built it twenty-seven years before, and still lived in it. It was dark before the train reached there and three of us rode ahead, but it being farther than we thought, the gates of the Bridger fortress were closed for the night. We knocked for admittance. He asked who was there.

"A party from the frontier," we responded.

"When?" he asked.

"This spring," we replied.

"Impossible!" said he. But we proved our case to his entire satisfaction by showing him the St. Louis papers.

He took us in and treated us very hospitably. He had a squaw and two children, a boy and a girl, half-casts of whom he seemed to be very fond. They were about fourteen and sixteen, respectively. Old Jim, as the lord of the castle was called, was anxious for us to hear them read, which we did. Madam Bridger, the squaw, cooked us a good supper, making some light biscuit. I don't know but that it was because we were very hungry but I certainly thought they were the best I had ever eaten. At all events they were the very best I had ever eaten of a squaw's baking. We had a good dry bed of buffalo rugs—the first dry bed for many a night—and I need not say that though a lad of only seventeen, worn out and tired as I was, I did not require rocking to induce sleep after getting into a warm bed.

The train came in about noon the next day and camped. Bridger, or Old Jim, gave us a remarkable history of himself. He said the name by which he was known was an assumed one, that he was a native of Virginia. He said that when a boy of sixteen he fell into disgrace and in consequence thereof ran away and that his family had never known of his whereabouts that he knew of, as he had changed his name and had never written home.

Joining a band of trappers he came out there where he had remained ever since. He claimed to be very rich, having made his money in the fur trade and after the Mormons commenced to come to Salt Lake he made much money out of them by trading his horses, taking their worn out ones and getting the full value of his money as "boot." According to his own story he was an unscrupulous sharper with very strong tendencies toward rascality.

We started the next day for Salt Lake City, a distance of 120 miles. We were in hopes to reach there in five days but were disappointed. The first stream to cross was Black River—not much of a stream but we had to take our wagons to pieces and ferry across in wagon boxes, a tedious operation as the ground was boggy leading to the approaches. All our luggage and even the wagons had to be carried to the river from the foot of the spurs—in some instances a hundred yards. A rope had to be run across the stream by someone swimming across and carrying a cord in his teeth attached to a rope and pulling it over. After this was made fast, a wagon box, well corked and pitched so as to be water tight, was launched and the work of ferrying commenced. It was a tedious and laborious job. Then Black Fork River had to be crossed. The first time it was accomplished without difficulty but the second time we had to swim our horses. It was difficult to make our horses take the stream. We had to push them in, but their instincts protested and they would turn and come back.

My little horse Billy was the best leader of all and was always selected for that service, especially where the current was swift. I had implicit confidence in him and had become careless. I jumped onto him without taking off his harness. I pulled off my pants and took them on my arm. We had reached the middle of the stream when Billy caught his hind foot in one of the traces and suddenly rolled over on his side and floated downstream. I became confused, not thinking to cut the harness and let him free. I jumped from him and went ashore, but seeing my little horse still struggling in the middle of the stream, my presence of mind returned and taking my knife in my teeth I started back for poor Billy, cut the harness and freed him and soon had him on shore. The current was strong, the water cold, and we must have been in the water half an hour. I became chilled, had cramps in coming ashore, and thought every stroke would be my last. And it would, had not good Jim Pierson seen my difficulty and stripped and come to my rescue.

I was brought ashore and laid out on the ground perfectly benumbed. They rubbed me and ran for the brandy, but it had all evaporated through Old George, and nothing was available but some of the cayene pepper. They rubbed me with that and gave me some internally, which brought me around. In less than three hours I was swimming the stream for the third time with a cord in my teeth but my horse was never good in the water after that.

WEBBER RIVER next gave us considerable trouble, a crooked river which we had to cross several times, of swift current where the wagons had to be held by ropes. On this river is the famous Echo Canyon. At some places in the canyon, which is some miles in length, one may talk in a common tone of voice and he will get no less than three distinct repeatals of the words he has spoken. Some days the echo is much more distinct than others. The scenery in some places is unspeakably grand. The canyon is about 200 yards wide with perpendicular walls 400 feet high. At some points one may see the mountain goats skipping from rock to rock where one would hardly think a fly could hang on. They were very shy and it is almost impossible to get near enough to shoot one. We occasionally had an opportunity to inspect the carcass of one who had departed this life leaving his head and horns, which we found to be about as much as we could carry.

We had now got past the region of game—only now and then an antelope—buffalo from herds of thousands had dwindled down to two or three at the most, a few ducks, and that was all. Saw some sign of the grizzly bear as soon as we had passed the summit and began to descend the western slope, but the terrible beast himself we had not seen. He was doubtless at home but none of us were ambitious of making his acquaintance so passed his door without leaving our card or knocking.

We now left Echo Canyon and passed over to another and up it for fifteen miles leading over the divide or low mountain range which separates the Green River valley from the Salt Lake basin. Of all the trails we had met with in our long journey, this was the chief. The gorge was filled with snow from bottom to top and was melting; streams of water from the sides were rushing in. The horses would break through the softening crust and have to be dragged out; wagons had to be taken to pieces and carried; and worse still when night came we had to take the horses back to Webber Canyon to feed. This Herculean labor lasted five days, but finally we reached the summit to find our ample reward in the most beautiful prospect on this earth.

Seventeen miles away down the gentle western slope lay the beautiful but then little village of Salt Lake as plain to the naked eye as if only half a mile away. Beyond the village, Salt Lake glistened in the sun, eighty miles long, its remotest shore as distinctly visible as the village itself. Away to the south as far as the eye could reach was one broad, beautiful, level plain covered already with a carpet of deepest green. All this loveliness of lake and landscape was bordered and framed by snowcapped mountains whose silver summits seemed to touch the blue vault of heaven. Such were my impressions of Salt Lake City and valley—then, and never since in all my travels has that picture faded from my memory or been surpassed by any other.

Not one of our company but enjoyed these beauties of nature. We celebrated the day by pitching our camp on the summit and dining on the best our larder afforded. At three o'clock we arrived on the ground about two miles out of the city where I am told the new fort now is, though I have not been there since. Here on the nineteenth day of May 1850 we camped for a few days, it being our forty-ninth day out and having traveled 1,300 miles from St. Louis.

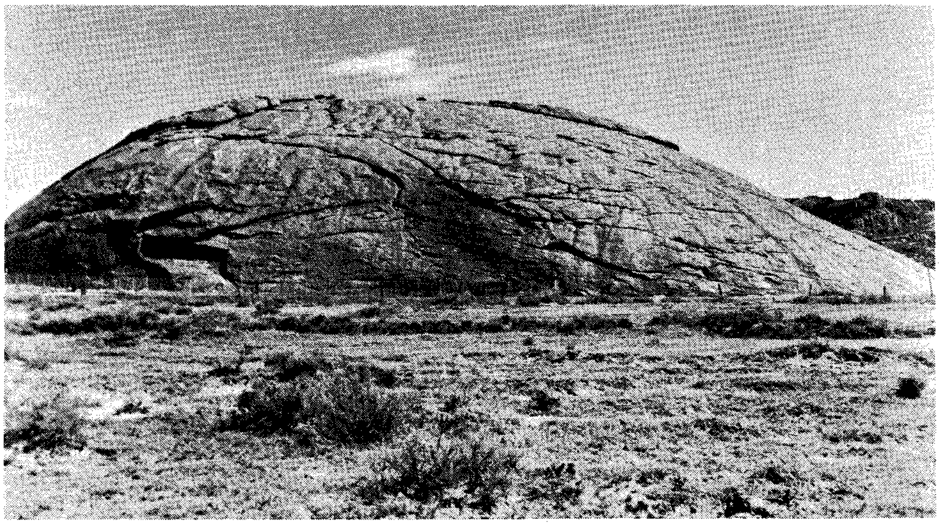
NEVER WERE PEOPLE more sur
prised than were those at Salt Lak
at such an early arrival. It was unpre
cedented, impossible; they would not be
lieve we had come all the way from th
Mississippi until we showed them ou
St. Louis papers. The hospitality of th
people of Salt Lake City was unbounde
No strangers were ever taken in an
treated more kindly by any people o
this earth than we were by them. Wome
in particular were as kind as mother
and sisters to sons and brothers returne
after a long absence. They would sto
us on the streets and call to us from th
doors of their houses to come in, s
anxious were they to learn where w
had come from, hoping to hear throug
us from their old home in the States o
possibly from England, Sweden, Den
mark, or even from the borders of Fin
land. They invariably asked us to ea
and would hardly take no for an answe

We remained in Salt Lake three days
going among the people, trading an
little articles we had for flour, which b
the way was a scarce article even wit
them as all flour was ground in han
mills and sifted. We bought it by th
pint measure paying thirty cents a pint
Where we traded for sugar we got tw
pints for one. A spool of thread woul
buy almost anything of the women, an
as most of the boys' mothers had fitte
them out bountifully with needles an
thread, they were thus enabled to driv
a brisk trade with the Mormon ladies
especially in the line of vegetables, tha
being the first season of plenty wit
them.

Brigham Young, priest, prophet an
king of the Mormon faith, was then i
the full vigor of life. He visited our cam
and conversed with us about our journe
but neither interfered with us nor ha
anything to offer offensive or un
pleasant. Some of our men attende
services at the Temple on Sunday an
were treated with the same civility tha
they would have a right to expect fro
any other class of worshippers. I shal
ever feel kindly towards the Mormo
people. I never speak evil of the bridg
that has carried me safely over th
stream.

Salt Lake in my time was only in it
infancy. The Mormons had only sent o
a party in 1847 to find a place for set
tlement and in 1848 was the first em
gration and it is wonderful how muc
they had accomplished in two years. The
already had many farms under conside
able improvement; and for the futu
city, it was handsomely laid out i
squares with irrigating streams runnin
through the principal streets, combinin
in this respect in a happy degree th
elements of novelty, utility and comfor
About a mile and a half out of tow
were springs of hot, warm and ice-col
water. They were utilized for bathin
purposes. The men monopolized the e
tablishment four days in the week, th
women two.

While riding out on a trading exped
tion for flour and vegetables, I sudden
looked around and discovered a hea
shower of rain which seemed to be clo
on me, I expected to be drenched to t
skin in a moment. Spying a house ha
a mile distant, I put my horse to the ru
never once looking over my shoulder b
every moment expecting a bath. I cou
hear it pouring in torrents back on t
mountainside and I spurred the pony
at his full speed. At last I arrived at t
house, there to meet five women laug
ing hard enough to burst steel corse
had they worn them. I inquired the cau



Courtesy Wyoming Travel Commission

Independence Rock in central Wyoming on the Sweetwater River. Even in 1850, the 17-year-old lad reported "many thousand names inscribed" on the monument. "I undertook to chisel my name there," Ferguson wrote, "but soon became discouraged and gave it up."

of their laughter and judge my surprise when they said they were laughing at me.

"It never rains in this valley," they said.

I looked back and there was the rain pouring down not half a mile off as it seemed to me.

"Well," said I rather indignantly, "you will see rain here, in this God selected country of yours, in less than three minutes."

I could not believe them when they told me that that shower was over five miles away on the mountainside.

"But," said I, "it is not over half that distance to the top of the mountain."

They said it was over twenty miles. However I was soon on friendly terms with these laughing women and effected a pretty good trade with them and rode away, they telling me in happy humor that if I saw another shower of rain not to break my horse's neck trying to run away from it if I did not like to be aughed at in Salt Lake valley. When I returned to camp one of the boys reated a similar experience. I laughed at him but took good care to keep my own adventure to myself.

On leaving our Mormon friends they all comforted us with the assurance that we need have no fear of the Indians, he Piutes, as they had all joined the ongregation of the Latter Day Saints, he chief only a few days before having been baptized. We felt glad to know that he noble chief and his whole tribe had secured tickets and a front seat in he happy hunting grounds of the hereafter; but somehow our faith was not mplicit that when we met him he would give us a "free pass" temporary journey.

Ogden Fork, as it was then called, hirty-eight miles due north from Salt Lake City, was our next objective point, where Ogden City now stands on the Webber River at the junction of the Union and Central Pacific Railroads. The afternoon after leaving Salt Lake City I was walking with one of the boys, oth of us building castles in the air, when he told me his sole ambition was to get money enough in California to return and buy a farm and make a home or his widowed mother and a sister, ounger than himself, that he had left ehind. His father had died when he was ut ten years old, leaving his mother in umble circumstances; but she had struggled through and managed to give him a good education and now he only wanted to make enough to place her in comfort in her old age.

I left him leading a pack horse and walking. Ten minutes later the pack turned, frightening the horse which sprang forward, striking him between the shoulders with his fore feet and knocking him down and his breath out of his body. We carried him under the shade of a nearby tree. Not knowing what else to do and remembering what my brother the doctor, had told me to do in case of an accident of the kind, I bled him. He seemed to revive for a short time but gradually sank back and died in about three hours. We buried him under the tree where we first carried him and where he died. Poor fellow! It was a sudden termination of his young life and all his fond hopes. I have often thought of his poor mother and sister of whom he had spoken so recently with his eyes glistening with tears of affection. Unfortunately the poor fellow was a stranger to all of us. We had met him only upon the start and none knew his name or the address of his poor mother. The labors and anxieties of such a journey are so exhausting to the body and absorbing to the mind that we rarely get even the name of an associate, much less a knowledge of his history and family. So it was in this case. I have often wondered if she ever heard of his sad end.

Parties like ours do not communicate so freely as they ought to. I have known persons intimately for years and knew them only as Tom or Charley without inquiring further. We don't like to appear inquisitive. I once knew a man in California by the name of H. G. Nichols for something over two years and we were almost as intimate as brothers. One day we were talking and both suddenly found that we were born within three miles of each other, he in the town of Twinsburg, Ohio and I in Aurora and both knew each other's family. On another occasion I was speaking of a young lady and an incident that occurred at a dancing party when she after dancing walked out onto the balcony of the hotel and fell to the sidewalk. A party I had known for years began to cross-question me about the incident and facetiously asked me if I was there. Thinking he disbelieved me I was annoyed and said, "No, but perhaps you were."

"Yes," said he, "I was. Now tell me who you are," said he. "I had always supposed you from Kentucky."

"And," said I, "I had always supposed you were from Missouri"—and that is what we called him. He proved to be Morris Meeker and when recently I returned to Ohio I went by his request and the promise I made him and saw his father and sisters in Cleveland. I only speak of this to illustrate how long persons may be acquainted and yet know nothing of each other's family or history. If persons so situated as we were would only be more communicative, more fathers and mothers would learn the fate of their sons if death or calamity overtook them far from home.

AT A NAMELESS stream a few miles north of Ogden Fork, which empties into an arm or bay of Salt Lake, we encountered the first serious embarrassment of the second half of our journey. We were two days in crossing this comparatively unimportant stream. Its approach was a quagmire for 200 yards. It was flooded from bank to bank with the melted snow of the eastern range of mountains and the current was the swiftest we had yet seen. But it had to be crossed and we went at it piece by piece across the swampy ground. One of the party whom we called "Sorrel," a red-haired man whose name I also never knew, swam the stream with the fish line in his teeth while one man in a tree played it out to him. This was to keep the line out of the swift current of the stream as much as possible so that the swimmer might not be handicapped. Time and perseverance accomplish all things. One boat was launched, but the current was so strong we could not take but small loads but we could get them across as fast as they could be brought to us across the swamp. It took the whole day and until ten o'clock at night to accomplish this part of the job. The next day we went about getting the horses over. They could not cross the swamp so we had to go up the stream about four miles before we could find a place where we could get the horses in. And the higher up the swifter the current. We had men on both sides looking for a place, for it required not only to get in but to get out as well. The horses seemed to know the danger as well if not better than ourselves for it was almost impossible to get them near the stream. When once you could get one into the stream the others would generally follow.

I was called on to lead the way or ride the leading horse. The best swimmer was brought to the front for poor Billy was wholly demoralized after his struggle in Black Fork. The horses were now all brought to the bank. I mounted the leader and he was then pushed bodily into the stream and the others followed. No sooner had we struck the water than the current drew us under, the horse floundering and I hanging to his neck, going downstream at the rate of at least eight miles an hour and all the other horses in the same manner, none having any more power over the current than if they had been shot from a cannon.

We were taken down in this manner for over a mile when the horse I was riding, or rather hanging to, struck the opposite shore. No sooner had he struck than I was on my feet on the bank, holding him by the bridle and singing out at the top of my lungs for help. One can judge of the rate of speed we floated

Courtesy Denver Public Library Western Collection

In May 1850 Ferguson spent two nights and a day visiting Jim Bridger (above), most famous of the Indian scouts and fur trappers, at Bridger's southwestern Wyoming headquarters. Bridger had settled there eight years before and his "fort" was a mud and pole trading post when Ferguson paid him a call.

when the boys on either bank could not keep up running at the top of their speed. The other horses were swept down past me like shot, but as fortune or Providence would have it there was a bend in the river about 300 yards below and there the other horses landed. It was a sloping bank and they all walked out. The boys soon came down to me and lifted my horse bodily out of the water. We were now all on the right side of the river without losing a horse or meeting with any other serious accident, and putting our wagons together we went on our way rejoicing.

We now had fair sailing on to Bear River, which is the largest river emptying into Salt Lake from the north. We struck it at a point in the valley about eighty miles from Salt Lake City. It had given us a great deal of anxiety as they told us in the city that we might as well stay there as go up and wait for the new party at Salt Lake City to come, who we tried to persuade to come with us as they had three fine boats ready to put into the stream. But they declined—saying it was too early, that they were not going up there to wait a month for emigration so we went without them.

Upon reaching the river we were agreeably surprised. Although it was a wide stream and much swollen, the current was slow and all we had to do was to man our wagon-bed ferry-boat and two men with spades paddled across, a third man standing at the hind and playing out the rope. Within half an hour from our arrival on its bank we were busy running our wagons and traps over and within five or six hours we were safe on the western shore, horses and all. Thus we were detained only a little over half a day at the stream, the crossing of which we had dreaded as much if not more than all others on our journey.

We were now in the extreme north of Salt Lake valley. At that time it was perfectly wild. There was no settlement, not even so far north as Ogden. The country was one beautiful, level plain—the bottom of a once great inland sea of which the present salt sea is but a miniature survival. The plain was dotted with thin patches of timber, especially near the numerous small streams that trickled down from the snowy mountains.

Leaving Bear River our route bore northwest up a gradual rise for about 150 miles until we reached Sublett's Cutoff, which I before mentioned as the route where we made a diversion from the most direct line to go down to Salt Lake. Had we pursued the direct course then we would have been some 200 miles farther on our journey. Here was Fort Hall and also some soda springs. The water when first taken out had all the effervescence and sparkling qualities of the domestic or manufactured article.

When we reached the forks we were surprised to find a piece of board put up on which was written in bantering style an invitation to "come on." As we had been leading all others thus far in the journey, it was not a little humiliating to find a party two days ahead of us. We resolved however to overtake them. For three days we made at least fifty miles a day and on the third day we came up with them and we camped together that night and for about a week traveled together. This party was called the Ohio party, some being from Pickaway County and others from Canton, Stark County.

There was a spirit of rivalry between the two parties to see which could outdo the other in progress. Finally the weaker teams began to give out and fall behind. Some were rather inclined to be vexed at those who were unnecessarily hurrying onward. Before long there was a loud murmur and complaint, secession and a split. Some of our own party falling behind, together with some of the Ohio party, and being about equally divided we bade good-bye to the balance of the original company we had thus overtaken and pursued our journey without further entangling alliances with foreign nations or companies.

We were traveling down Humboldt River, named in honor of the famous German traveler, having struck it near its source at a point where now is Elko, a station of the Central Pacific Railroad. We followed down it 300 miles, tributaries constantly coming in until at last it becomes a pretty respectable river. After 250 miles it gradually diminishes and at the end of 50 miles more it sinks into the earth and entirely disappears, unless possibly to rise as a spring in the bottom of Humboldt Lake. It is a reminder of the legendary story of the rive in China where Cublai Khan built in tl thirteenth century a summer palace c the Alph near where it is said to sir into the earth and is thenceforth foreve lost and to which Coleridge alludes i his weird poem, the opening stanza c which runs thus:

"In Xanadu did Cublai Khan
A stately palace Dome decree,
Where Alph, the sacred river, ran
By caverns measureless to man
Down to a sunless sea."

This is the famous sink of the Hun boldt. Any one who went to Californi by this overland route in the early day and conversed with another with lik experience was sure to hear again an again of the Humboldt, the sink, and th desert. Upon our arrival at the sin about ten o'clock in the morning w camped, intending to give our horse rest for the day and cross the desert b night.

Soon a division of opinion develope among the party as to which of the route should be taken. Some were for takin the hilly and more northerly route bearing toward Oregon; others (and th majority) were in favor of the mor southerly route more directly towar California but involving the desert country. I protested with spirit against th desert route.

About three o'clock in the afternoon struck out alone on a tour of reconnoitering and went down the southerl route five or six miles where the road stil bore directly south as far as I could se I turned back fully believing that I ha seen enough to convince the others that was right and they were wrong, but whe arriving in camp and reporting, I foun them unchangeable in behalf of th desert route. I persuaded one of them t take observation of the country. I wa in hopes our report would influence th majority, but those who had most to sa seemed to have the least knowledge c the geography of the country. They ha desert on the brain, and desert they wer bound to have.

I remonstrated again, showed ther how it was laid on the map. It did n good for instead of influencing them seemed to touch their pride or rathe vanity. The idea of a seventeen-year-ol boy attempting to dictate to or even ir struct grown-up men was preposterou But they soon wished they had followe the boy's advice. By not doing so th majority lost their lives.

AT HALF PAST eight o'clock of June evening we started on that il fated route with all the water our vessel would hold, some even carrying a buck in their hand. They expected to cros the desert by daylight the next mornin Daylight came but it brought the mo dismal and dreary prospect man eve beheld. O, our poor famishing horses t say nothing of ourselves! I then tried t have them return to the Humboldt sir —but no, this was the true route. The with those who were so wise we travele on till ten o'clock when we came to or of those sand mounds or dunes on tl north side of which were two small lake Some coarse, rough bunches of gras when we first saw them, raised our hop and even I began to hope that after a I was wrong in my conjectures and th my companions were right.

Now one of our party, a wiseacre su as Artemus Ward would call a "know edgeous cuss," commenced to ridicule n oon my knowledge or assumed knowldge of the country saying, “they would ave looked well to have followed the lvice of a kid that had just left his other—that it was a pity she had not panked me before I left home and taken ut some of my self-conceit.” I told him at the right of such discipline I still knowledged as the prerogative of my other but of no other human being; and he thought he could do the duties of ch office he was then and there welome to try the experiment. Though illmpered and insulting, he did not then roceed to violence.

When we arrived at the lakes, judge ur surprise and disappointment on findg the water of the strongest alkali. ome of the horses got a few swallows efore they tasted it; others we succeeded keeping away. We found some springs earby but they were hot, some boiling. esting our horses here for an hour we gain started and pushed on over the reary waste of sand till night. The day, rtunately, had been cool and cloudy. ur prospects however were as gloomy s ever; but the horses must have rest, to ay nothing of ourselves who were in nything but a sweet temper, everybody laming his neighbor and everyone oming in for his share of the blame except me. As I had fought so hard against e route from the start, no one presumed blame me, not even the smart-alec ho had ridiculed the kid.

Old Tiger, the horse we bought before rossing the Missouri, got so much of e alkali water that he was getting eaker every hour. All in fact were failg except the Canadian ponies; they ere all right and plodded right along as ough nothing had happened. We laid ver until midnight and then started for -God only knew where, for we all confessed we did not. We made but poor eadway that night and when morning ame we were on the same shingle lava at rung like a bell when the horses epped on it.

There was some change in the prospects in the morning. We could see some w shrubs ahead and some signs of egetation, little patches of sword grass ith sorry attempts at better grass rowing. Presently the mules began to ay and the Canucks to prick up their rs, sniff, and push ahead. We knew we ere coming to water. O, how impatient ere both man and beast to reach the pectant water! Words are valueless d fall dead and meaningless in the attmpt to describe such a scene to one who s not had a similar experience.

Poor old Tiger, who had been staggerg along, soon stumbled and fell. We lled off his pack and let him lie. Some ere for killing him but Costler and yself would not permit it. From that me on the horses began to drop, one ter another, until five succumbed to e terrible effects of famishing. We ft them as we left Tiger and went on. s all misery must have an end, so did rs when at last we reached a little eek of fresh water and plenty of ass.

But now came the tug of war; our rses and mules rushed with fury for e water and it was almost impossible control them. Mules were braying, rses pawing and men swearing, a wild d crazy orchestra in the desert. As on as we got the survivors watered d turned out to grass, some of us arted back with water for the poor asts that had fallen by the way. The rthest, old Tiger, was about five miles ck. What was our surprise when we met the old fellow staggering on a few rods and then stopping to rest. We gave him about a gallon of water. He stood for awhile begging hard for more like Dickens' school-boy at Dotheboys Hall, then he started off in a half trot for the camp, whinneying as he went. We met three others of the five staggering on as best they could, and to each we supplied a little water, but the fifth had bade farewell to the trials and tribulations of the desert journey.

When we got back to camp with the animals, tired and worn out as we were, we enjoyed the consolation of a cooked supper and a good drink of coffee which had been prepared for us. It was wonderful the change in one's temper effected by the comforts of a satisfied stomach. Only a short time before, everyone was cross and ready to quarrel with the first who would tread on the tail of his coat but now all were cheerful and sociable. We camped here nearly three days and by that time our teams had recruited, except those that took the alkali water —they were still weak and drooping.

After three days' rest we traveled on at easy stages for four days when we became convinced that we had lost our point of compass in the desert and were now traveling in the direction of Oregon instead of California; but rather than retrace our steps across that 105 miles of desert we concluded to keep on to the borders of Oregon and take our chances of getting down to California. Better had it been for most of us had we struck our tents and returned to the desert.

THE FIFTH NIGHT out we camped at the mouth of a deep rock-walled canyon. We had seen no signs of Indians since leaving Humboldt and had become careless, thinking there were none in that part of the country, turning loose the horses without picketing them, and sitting up telling stories and singing songs till rather late when we turned in without a sentry, not having kept one since leaving Salt Lake. Soon all were sound asleep, none dreaming of what was in store for us. Suddenly we were aroused by the ponies rushing into camp snorting and trembling and no one could drive them out. We should have known that Indians were around by the action of the ponies for they always gave us warning, had we not supposed we were entirely out of Indian country. But hearing nothing of the other horses and mules which seemed to be feeding quietly, we came to the conclusion that the ponies had been frightened by wolves which were plenty in that region. So we went to bed but only for a brief time when we were again aroused by yells that could come from none but the throats of redskin devils.

In an instant we were up and out. The devils were trying to drive the ponies out of camp. We gave them a warm reception. They then made down among the horses and mules and drove them before them, all the while keeping up their unearthly yells. The Ohio boys were camped more to one side of us and down nearer where the horses were feeding. Most of them had thrown away their guns, consequently there was no shooting among them but they ran to secure their horses and mules. When the Indians got among them they let fly a shower of arrows, killing three men dead on the spot and wounding four more. We followed up, firing after them in the dark, and soon made it so hot for them that they got away with only a part of the stock. When daylight came we mustered about twenty horses all told, including the ponies which never left camp. We buried the three dead comrades in one grave and cared for the four wounded as best we could. One had three arrows in his body and could possibly live but a little while; another had an arrow between the shoulder blades and it seemed doubtful if he could live. The other two were not so severely wounded but the arrows were poisoned, so the chances were against them. Then we commenced to pack up, little thinking we would have another attack from the devils, but about eight o'clock they came again in hundreds showering down on us like hell-hounds and sending arrows by thousands. The very hills resounded with their yells.

There was only one course to pursue and that was for every man to do the best he could for himself. We rushed for our horses which were close by, but on our way out poor Jim Pierson, just a little ahead of me, was struck in the neck by an arrow. He fell and before he had time to rise to his feet a red devil brained him with a stone tomahawk and then turned on me. Thank God, before he had time to commit another such atrocious and cowardly deed he got a free leaden passport to join his fathers in the happy hunting grounds. I only wished that poor Jim could have known that his cruel death was so quickly avenged.

Those that could reach their horses did so and rode for dear life for the mouth of the canyon where the Indians had blocked us off. But we were bound to get to open ground, everyone shooting his way through until he got into the open field where we called the roll and found remaining but nine out of twenty-three. We halted for awhile hoping a few more stragglers would come in but we waited in vain. We loaded our guns and rode back to the mouth of the canyon and fired on them, taking good care that we did not get hemmed in, but the devils were wary of our guns and made for the side hills and skulked behind the rocks.

We got one poor fellow who had four arrows in him. He had hidden in a water-hole among some rocks. Others had run down and jumped down into the water and tried to hide themselves, but the Indians found them and dispatched them, and such doubtless would have been the fate of the one we rescued had not our second attack frightened them away. He told us he lay in the water with a big lily over his face, while the Indians found another who lay not ten feet from him, dragged him out and butchered him, but when they heard our shooting they ran and then he came out.

We buried them all that afternoon. They were stripped of every article of clothing, and even the poor fellows that we had buried in the morning had been dug up and stripped. We looked around for something they might have left but there was nothing. God only knew what would become of us; we did not, with nothing left but our arms and old Tige.

John See, one of our boys, had put the pack saddle on him, the bag containing our last few pints of flour, and hung the coffee-pot, kettle and frying-pan to the saddle when the stampede started. Tige followed us through pell-mell, kettle and frying-pan rattling. No doubt he frightened as many Indians as we did. After it was all over one of the boys said, “Charlie, you are wounded, too”—and sure enough I was. There was an arrow, shaft and all, sticking in my back. It had struck me just over the kidneys but had passed through three or four folds of a coarse woolen shirt which no doubt saved my life. It had entered so deep into the flesh that it had to be cut out.

WE STOPPED there until after dark and then pulled out in hopes of deceiving the redskins, which no doubt we did, and traveled till ten o'clock that night when we lay down, taking good care not to be surprised again. Then up at break of day and starting anew and traveling on till nine o'clock, when being perfectly exhausted we took a rest and had a consultation as to what to do.

Most of our party were in favor of returning. It was put to vote and seven were for returning to the sink of Humboldt, three in favor of going on through. When asked where, none could tell. Costler, See and myself were for going on. The very ones that had been so determined to take that route were the ones that now wanted to go back. I again came to the front. No, I would not go back. I would not retrace our steps over 300 miles and encounter again those Indians that had massacred nearly two-thirds of our party or recross that desert. Besides, our horses would never stand it and if they did we would be farther from any settlement than we probably were now.

They thought we would meet with others who would let us have some provisions. I said we had none to spare when we were at the sink and more than likely those that followed us to that point would be in like condition; that I firmly believed we were then not more than two or three hundred miles from Oregon, perhaps not more than one; that I had been led off there against my judgment and now that I was there, all the powers of hell could not turn me back though every man deserted me.

Two of the men stood with me. We each had a horse and old Tige extra, but he was down and it was plain that he could not last long. We were afraid to kill him and eat him, thinking he being poisoned it would be dangerous to us. So we agreed to a fair division of the flour and coffee for that was all we had. Every man had a pint cup attached to his belt. We found we had just ten pints of flour—just one pint to a man—and six pints of coffee which we divided into ten parts. The coffee kettle and frying-pan being ours, we claimed it—in fact the flour was ours as well.

It was now about noon and time to start. When it came to bidding each other good-bye it was a sad and painful scene. They again urged us to return with them. Costler and See would have, I think, had I consented. I told them not to be governed or influenced by me, I was only a boy, but that I had made up my mind not to be led any longer by anyone; that I was going through or die in the attempt, even if every man went back. Then they said they would travel with us one or two days longer if, on finding no change, we would then return with them. I told them I would never retrace our steps; that in my judgment we were approaching the route leading from Oregon to California; that we should strike the road and stand a chance of falling in with emigrants even if we did not strike a settlement in Oregon.

That settled it. It had never occurred to them before and I must be frank enough to say it had not to me. So still an undivided company we traveled on until five o'clock that afternoon, camped, built fires as though we intended to stay there for the night, but as soon as it was dark we went on until about ten when we lay down and slept till daylight and then went on until eight or nine when we stopped, made coffee and baked our pancake. Our allowance was three spoonfuls of batter each man—no danger of gout from high living; then after a little rest we went on until five o'clock, then rested again till dark, and so on until the fourth day when in the morning we found old Tige had passed in his check. I think there is a heaven for good horses and if so I think "Old Tige" found large balance to his credit and a fr range in green pastures by clear wate in the celestial realms where weary a heavy laden horses alone find rest.

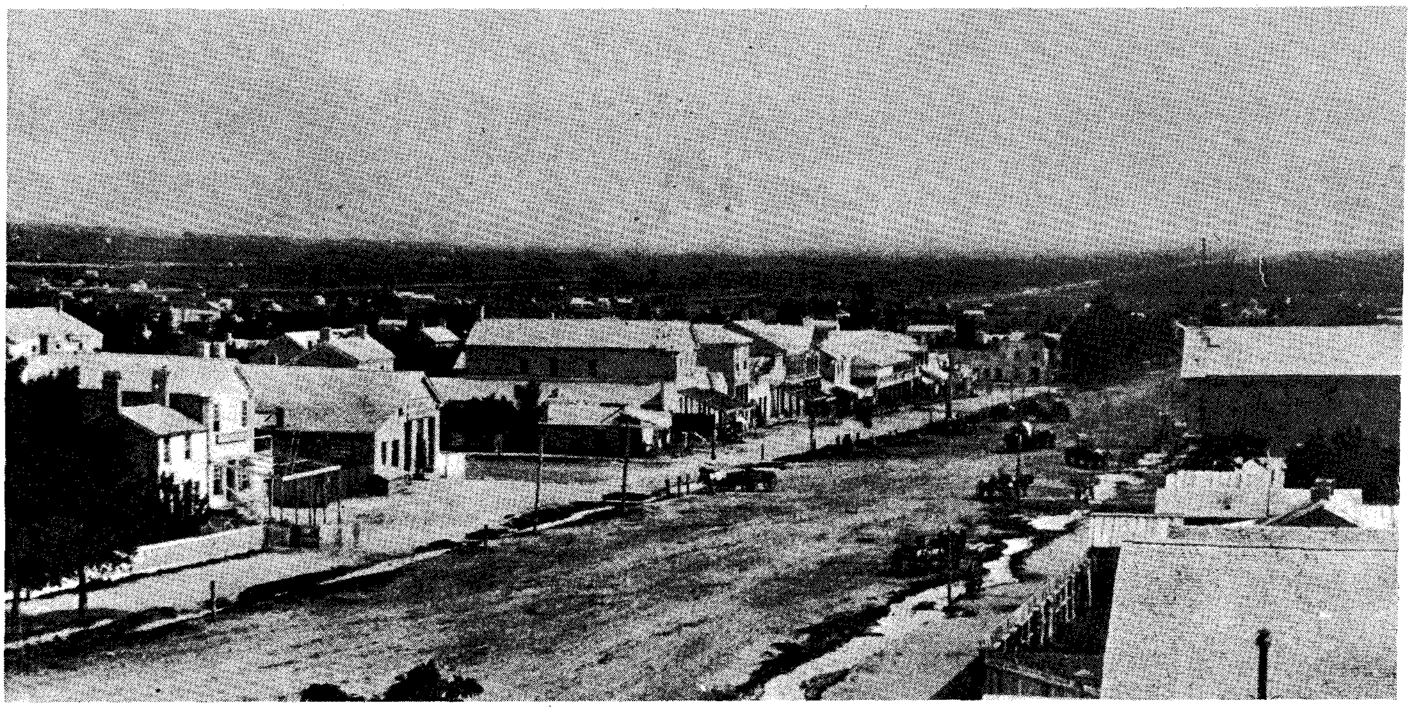
JOHN SEE and I were riding a lit ahead of the rest when we saw badger and killed it. We thought we h a prize and stopped a little earlier th night to cook him. We boiled him b when we tried to eat him one might well have undertaken to put his tee through a piece of leather as throu any part of that badger. So we dra the broth, or rather the water he w boiled in, for it did not rise to the digni of broth even to us famishing men. Ho ever, we carried along the boiled badge remains, riding till the next morni when the boys set the badger's corp boiling again.

It was rather a warm morning and lay down in the shade of a tree and f asleep. After two or three hours Jo See said, "Charlie, get up and have sor of your badger." The shade had shift and left me with the sun shining full my face. I felt sick and the name of ba ger was enough for me; my stomach r volted. I could not even look at the badg nor could I taste my pancake. One of t party pulled out a twenty dollar go piece and offered it to me for my pa cake. I told him the money was of use but if he wanted the cake to take But the rest of the boys would not l him take it and told me put it in n pocket and keep it until my stoma settled. So I folded it up and put it my vest pocket and kept it till night wh I ate it.

Many who may read this narrati doubtless will be curious to know som thing of how starving men feel and wh are their thoughts, reflections, and ev dreams. I can only say to those wl have had no such experience that, spea ing for myself, it is utterly impossible describe my feelings under the circu stances related. No language spoken man has wealth of expression sufficie

Salt Lake City, Utah about ten years after Ferguson's stopover. Residents in May 1850—the town then was only two years old marveled at the expedition's arrival so early in the year. Brigham Young himself visited Ferguson's camp.

Courtesy Utah Historical Soci



convey to anyone any intelligent or
preciable idea of the emotions, anxie-
s, distresses, agonies, fears, weariness,
spondency and faintness, even unto
ath, of men so situated.

As a slight indication of my mental
d physical status under this terrible
fliction, I will state that while riding
ong alone the memory of every good
nner I had ever eaten in my life and
ery good thing I relished in childhood
my mother's cooking would come back
th such reality that I seemed to taste
as if still partaking of it. I dreamed
luxurious meals and cool drafts of
ter, of tea and coffee, of milk and
eam at home, and awoke to the sad
ality that it was all a dream. Perhaps
riding along one of the boys would
le up by my side as mentally weak,
eary and faint as myself and would
y to strike up a little conversation,
eerless, petulant and unhappy as that
cross and quarreling children some-
ing like this:

"Do you see that gap in the mountain
ead of us?"

"Yes."

"Well, do you know when we get there,
think the road will turn to the south."
ien the sudden and petulant response:
Vhat in blank do you know about the
ads; were you ever there?"

"Well, you need not be so cross about
I probably know as much about it as
u do."

"Well if you know so blamed much
out the road, what in the blank are
u here for, lost in the Sierra Nevada
ountains?"

This specimen of unhappy social inter-
urse is to show the weakness of both
ind and body among men naturally kind
d friendly and imbued with sympathies
sulting from common sorrows. We had
come weak and petulant children. In
midst of our reflections perchance a
rse would stumble and fall.

"Poor brute," we could only say, "may
e Lord pity the poor horse," for we
emed to have no mercy. These unhappy
elings were apt to possess us generally
out an hour after eating our little
ke, when our stomachs were gnawing
reason and judgment out of our
ains as then we were weak and sto-
ich-sick but agreeable enough to each
ier generally.

N THE FIFTH DAY after the boys
were killed, when we had camped
d made our coffee and cakes, one of
party's horses having gone lame, he
ought he would walk on ahead and lead
horse and we would overtake him.
all tried to persuade him not to go
ne but he was determined and we
re not in the best of humor. Go he
uld and did, and we said no more.
remained about two hours after he
t and then started. After about two
urs John See and I being about 200
'ds ahead of the rest, we heard a
rible noise and listened and at once
ne to the conclusion that there were
ians ahead. I held the horses while
went cautiously and looked around
end of the spur of a hill. He soon re-
ned and the other boys, coming up and
ing John's movements, knew some-
ng was not right.

Ie reported what he had seen. He
the horses with the wounded man
l crawled around the point, when a
ange sight presented itself. There
e at least thirty Indians around a
fire having a high old time, yelling,
vling, laughing, others feasting. We
around the point unobserved by them and within 150 yards when we all took deliberate aim and fired, then rushed upon them yelling as loud as any of those devils ever did and at the same time firing our revolvers at them. Only two of us had Colt's revolvers; others had "Allen's pepper-boxes" as the early style revolvers were called.

The Indians were as much taken by surprise as we had been a few days before and ran for their lives as we had—that is, those that had lived to run. Most of them bit the dust and some that were not dead but only wounded when we reached them immediately started on their journey to the happy hunting grounds of Manitou the Mighty. On looking around we soon found the lifeless body of Freddy, the only name we knew him by, his clothes stripped off and fourteen arrows in him. His gun lay by his side discharged and the stock broken. Near him lay three redskins, which testified to the severity of the conflict and the heroism of our companion. We buried the poor boy as well as we could and left with only the slight consolation that there were eleven less Indians in this world than an hour before.

We traveled that night without stopping as we formerly had and did not camp till ten in the morning. Our provisions were now all gone, no flour and only coffee enough to make two more drinks. Our reasons for not killing a horse before were that if we did so it would put at least three of us on foot and that would retard our progress. We had determined not to kill one so long as the flour lasted.

Now the question presented itself, whose horse was to be killed? My Billy was in the best condition and some proposed to kill him. I objected and the matter was dropped until we halted the next morning when the horse killing bill was again before the council. I offered to cast lots and if it fell to my horse I would accept the result in silence. Blank, the man who had so much to say when we left the Humboldt about the boy who had just left his mother, spoke up and said he was not going to pick bones when there was plenty of meat and took his gun to shoot Billy. Upon that I took my pistol out and stepped up to him telling him that as sure as he shot my horse I would give him an immediate interview with his Maker. For that he did not seem to be prepared and desisted. All the rest were against him, saying that I only demanded what was fair to all. Then we all agreed to defer the killing till afternoon, camp early, and kill and have a good feast. So we started with that understanding and traveled until two o'clock.

While we were on the lookout for a good place to camp and kill, we came around a short turn where to our great surprise and joy we came upon a fresh wagon trail not more than three days old—a very fresh track to us.

Had an angel from Heaven come down and invited us to dine in the meads of Asphodel, he could not have been received with greater rejoicing or with more grateful hearts than was the sight of that simple wagon trail three days old in the rocky recesses of the Sierra Nevada Mountains. We shouted and laughed, shook hands, yes, and cried. Even Blank came to me and asked me to forgive him, showered compliments on me, said I was a good boy, that he never intended to shoot Billy, that it was a good thing it so turned out as otherwise we should have had to kill a horse and that would have put us back and now we were sure to be all right. As for myself I would have forgiven anybody or anything but an Indian.

We followed that trail until we reached their camp of the night before. Then we lay down but we were up again in the morning betimes and soon struck their last camp when we felt sure of overtaking the party within three hours. Then our horses began to lag and we were so worn out and weak that when we got off we had to be helped on again. Not one had strength to mount his horse without assistance. The arrow wound in my back was greatly inflamed and very sore. I had done nothing for it except that the boys used to wash it; and as for the other wounded man, how he ever stood it to ride as he did and live has always been a mystery to me. He had four arrow wounds in his body and was red all over with inflamation and swollen as full as his skin could hold and so weak he could hardly sit on his horse, but he bore it all without a murmur.

Two or three of the horses began to stop and refuse to go and we were compelled to leave them. It was then thought best for those who could to ride ahead and get the train to stop. Costler, See and myself went and overtook them just as the party had rested for the day. As soon as they heard our pitiful story, they like true mountaineers volunteered to go back and meet those we had left behind. A light wagon was hitched up and a small party of horsemen galloped back followed by the wagon to bring the wounded man in. As for me, I began to think I was in Paradise. They proved to be a party of emigrants from Oregon bound for California and taking all their stock with them. They had cows, calves, pigs, sheep, and even hens and turkeys moving with their outfit for the new gold fields.

NO SOONER had our party been brought in than the women of the emigrant party, having learned of our starving condition and with the natural propensity that prompts the heart of woman, set about the work of cooking, each trying to surpass the other in generous acts. I was lying on the ground in front of a tent when an elderly woman came out and invited me to enter her tent and gave me a bowl of mush and milk. I never tasted anything so good and was not long in putting it out of sight. Then, like Oliver Twist, I asked for more. But the old lady refused me. I told her I had money, that I did not want it for nothing. It was not money, she said, but that too much was not good for me. I could not understand the old lady's philosophy. I had had nothing to eat for a long time, and was now where there was plenty, was hungry and willing to pay, and why couldn't she let me have it? Weak in mind almost as in body, like a disappointed child I got up to leave her tent feeling that after all she was a stingy old creature, unwilling to give a starving man only so little. But just as I had stepped out up came another bowl of the delicious mush and milk. The old lady stood by quietly looking on and when I had finished it she said in a most gentle and motherly tone, "Now, young man, you are welcome to more and all you want." She knew better than I did how to treat the empty stomach of a long fasting and famishing man.

The wounded man and all our party being in, the devoted women had something of every kind they had cooked and it was brought out and every one invited to eat, which we all did, though some afterwards paid dearly for their lack of judgment and excesses. No one ever saw poor fellows in such misery as the most of us were in. I was not as bad as the rest, for the mush and milk administered by the sagacious and prudent old lady had prepared my stomach for the severer ordeal it had to undergo in receiving an undue quantity of bacon and eggs and hot biscuit, just the food our stomachs were unprepared for and under the cravings of which we had neither judgment nor prudence.

The Oregonians very generously offered to lay over a day that we might rest ourselves and horses which were as much worn out as we were. They told us that Indians were ahead of us and it would be better for us to travel with them, an invitation we most gladly accepted. They always kept out scouts to look out for the noble Indian and woe to the red devil that crossed their path. They told us that the tribe which killed so many of our party were the Goose Lake Indians. Those we were among now were an Upper California tribe and in all probability those that killed Freddy were of the same tribe as it was far south of the Goose Lake country and the lake tribe was not likely to encroach upon the Feather River tribes.

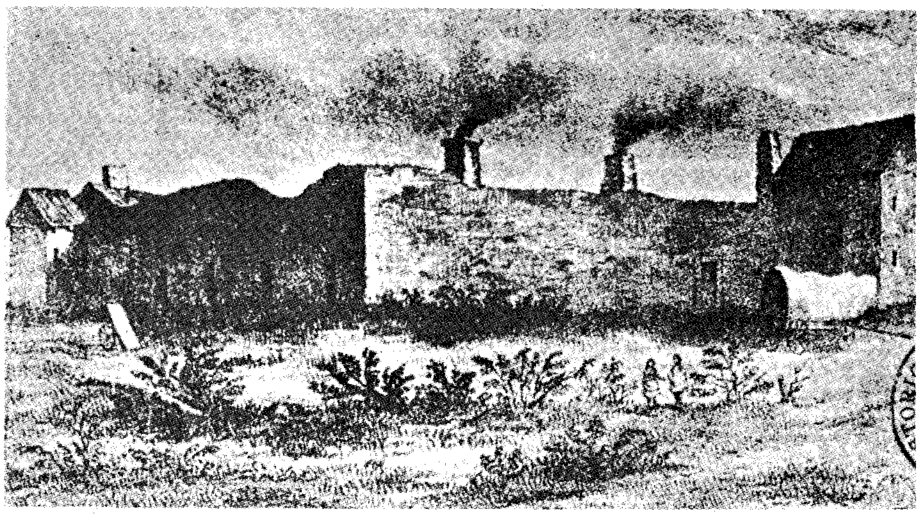
They held over two whole days for our party to rest, then traveled by short and easy stages starting at eight in the morning and camping about two in the afternoon, making only about fifteen miles a day. It was a great relief to our poor fagged and jaded horses.

But judge our surprise when we came to buy provisions of them. Only think, ye who never paid more than three or four cents a pound for flour by the barrel or sack in the scarcest times, of paying a dollar a pound for everything, meat, coffee, and even salt. The captain of the party was a shrewd man and a money maker. He was well to do and had plenty of stock and money. He had already been in California and had done well and knew just what he was doing now and what would be the outcome of his present enterprise.

He offered to buy our horses at fifty dollars a head and let us ride them—that is, if we could remain with them. Of course before we got in the proceeds of the horses, the fifty pounds of provisions would have been eaten up. Some of the boys were compelled to sell as they had no money; and probably we would all have been necessitated to do the same had it not been for a lucky circumstance that happened.

He was very obliging; anything we wanted that he had we could have, of course by paying a dollar a pound. We wanted some beef and he offered to kill a fat one if we would take 150 pounds; it was only to oblige us. We consented to take it; but judge our surprise when the fat beef turned out to be a little runt of a nine months heifer. It reminded me of the song descriptive of the beef that Yankee Doodle killed, which took two men to hold it up while Mr. Doodle knocked it down. For beef this poor little heifer took the cake. But what were we to do? We must have meat and had to have it; besides, we were not very particular, any tasted good and such appetites as we had were uncontrollable. We were eating all the time and it is no wonder that some or all of us were sick.

The poor fellow that was wounded had to be carried in the wagon, getting worse every day, and his wounds a sight to behold. The Oregonians were very good to him, especially the women who looked after him and dressed the wounds and were as kind to him as if he had been a brother. He had now become peevish as a child and grumbled and fretted and almost seemed ungrateful in return for their kind care. I never saw such a change in anyone in my life. Doubtless he suffered greatly from the jar and jolting of the wagon, and I think he knew he could not live, which still more disturbed his weakened mind. He lived only till we got into Lassen's and died during the night—was found dead in the morning. He was the sixteenth of our party killed by the Indians.


Courtesy Idaho Historical Soci

Fort Hall, Idaho in 1849 (where the Oregon Trail split to California and Oregon) o year before the author's visit. Near here Ferguson's men joined the Ohio party a trekked southwest to the Humboldt River near present-day Elko, Nevada.

MY OWN WOUND was now progressing as well as could be expected. As the arrow had been cut out, the wound bled freely. No doubt the poison was drawn out so largely as to be ineffective and I applied some salve that my brother had given me, which proved beneficial. On the whole it was just as well that old George drank the brandy, for otherwise it would have fallen into the hands of the Indians, and the quinine too, had we not after discovering George's affection for the jug carried the other medicines on our persons. Costler carried the quinine and I the salve—thus saving it in our retreat that fatal morning.

One evening after camping, a scout of the Oregon party rode in and reported a party of Indians camped about five miles ahead, about twenty in number. Having seen signs of the band he had followed on unobserved until he found them camped; they had evidently been there some time as they had built huts. All of the party were up in arms in a few minutes and ready to start for them. The women were as much excited as the men. But the captain put a stop to their haste; told them the better plan would be to wait till night and crawl carefully out and bag the whole party. His plan was adopted and guns were cleaned and ammunition looked after. It was arranged that some should remain with the women and children and the rest would start about eleven o'clock, surround their camp, and at a signal rush in and surprise the ferocious natives.

Three of our party volunteered. There was no lack of volunteers—the trouble
was that all wanted to go which wou
leave the home-guard too small. But t
women were not afraid to remain alor
they wanted the "red devils rubbed ou
as they expressed it. While preparati
was being made for the raid upon t
Indian camp an amusing incident c
curred. The captain had a little dum
stub of a boy some six or seven years o
about as thick as he was long, who ca
stubbing up to his father saying, "Fad
fader, I want you to buy me a wyfle

"What do you want a rifle for, n
son?" said the father.

"I want to shoot the Ingins," repli
the precocious son and heir emphasizi
his answer with one of his father's mo
profane curses.

"That's right, my son," said h
father, "I'll buy you a rifle," and h
eyes beamed with fatherly pride.

He was proud of his son's speech a
doubtless regarded him as a rising you
Norval. I think if that boy had cut do
all the cherry trees in Oregon and th
lied about it the old man would ha
cheerfully gone his bail and carried
the case. If the biography of that fath
has ever been written and placed in t
libraries of Oregon, it will probably
found that he was not a descendant o
Puritan family.

It was midnight when we started a
half-past two when we arrived in sig
of the Indian camp. Their fires w
burning dimly. The captain ordered
halt and then crawled up a little nea
and reconnoitered. There were eight
in our party. The captain returned, pla
the men about equal distance ap
around the camp, and ordered each
crawl silently to within about one h
dred yards of the camp and there
perfectly quiet till a signal came fr
him. Then we should come down u
them.

It was understood that the raid
to be made just at break of day or w
light enough to see that none esca
Judging from the systematic manner
which he went about the work, I th
it was not the first Indian camp he
surprised. I had lain full three-quart
of an hour when the signal was given
one most unearthly yell from the c
tain. The prime object thereof was
bring the redskins out of their tents.
an instant every man was on his f
running and yelling at the top of

ice and in less time than it takes to l the story twenty-seven wild and fero- us Indians were changed into harm- s spirits of the air, never more to take war-path or surprise and slaughter arty of emigrants.

Some may think it was a cruel and un- nly proceeding but had those who nk so been situated as we were—whose npanions had been massacred before r eyes; whose dead of a few days be- e still lay naked and unburied in the nyon and those we hastily buried ex- med and stripped of their grave thes; driven to the extreme verge of rvation; saved from death only by e mere chance of having fallen in with other party; standing guard by night d sending out scouts by day to look t for a ferocious enemy as the man- ting tiger lurking near villages and lated homes in Hindustan is watched r and hunted by the natives—I think happily they survived to return, it uld be with modified views of the emi- ant's dealings with the plundering and rderous tribes of the interior of the ntinent in the year of grace '49.

TILL if anyone thinks otherwise and believes that a free and roving tribe controlled by military force can be umanized and civilized by any process own to civilized or Christianized man, nevertheless would warn him not to k his person among them. Powder, t prayer, is their only civilizer. You nnot manage by reasoning with him and rsuading him as the wag said he con- lled his vicious and cantankerous le. Nothing will convert an Indian e convincing him that you are his perior and there is but one process by ich even that can be done and that is shut off his wind. I never knew but e "truly good" Indian and he was dead. I have heard considerable romance m persons inexperienced about the ave and noble red man, but I never yet ve met one. All I have ever known have en cowardly and treacherous, never ack like men but crawl upon you three four to one and shoot you down as y did sixteen of our party in the can- n.

Then why not attack them, not wait be attacked by them and then only in f-defense take perhaps one of their rthless lives? In all modern civilized rfare, to surprise the enemy and kill they do not surrender is the climax of litary renown. The world applauds, ngress promotes, Parliament does like- se, graciously voting the hero of the r at the same time a little hundred usand pounds and a dukedom. And n bishops, priests and clergy offer yers and incense to Divine Providence the delivery of their equally civilized l equally honorable and patriotic ene- into their hands! But if a party of igrants surprise and annihilate a band Indians who perhaps only the day be- e had murdered every man, woman and ld of a large wagon train and spattered wagon wheels with the brains of es, why the Christian world holds up hands in breathless horror.

ut what is the difference? The Indian he emigrant's enemy. If the emigrant s the advantage, why should he not e it, for most surely the Indian will! o not believe in wanton cruelty to the ian, but when you are in a country ere you know he is your enemy and ot only waiting his chance but looking for his opportunity, why not cut him n as otherwise he most surely will .?

Nearly 200 years ago the peaceful settlers of New England had a mournful experience with the local tribes of Indians, less ferocious it is believed than the tribes of the interior of the present day. The well-known history of Mrs. Dustin of Haverhill, Massachusetts who in 1697 was carried off with her infant only a week old and her nurse is an impressive instance of savagery and the heroism and glorious triumph of a noble and distressed woman. She was taken from her bed half dressed, and without shoes or stockings exposed to the cold March wind. They took her northward by canoes up the Merrimac to a point near Concord, New Hampshire. They had killed the babe at the outset. Here they rested for the night with an Indian family. Getting some intimation that they were soon to suffer shocking cruelty, Mrs. Dustin resolved to attempt escape and laid her plans with her nurse, Mary Neff, and a boy prisoner named Leonardson. At midnight when the savages were asleep Mrs. Dustin, the nurse and the boy killed the Indians, took off their scalps, scuttled all the canoes but one to prevent pursuit, and set off down the river for Haverhill. They reached home with the scalps as evidence of their prowess, and then found safety in Boston.

Happily now there is a little light in the East on the subject of the justifiable treatment of the savage by the modern emigrant, for as recently as 1874 the humane and gentle descendants of the Pilgrims have delineated in imperishable marble the thrilling story of Mrs. Dustin. A monument to her and her companions has been erected near the scene of the tragedy. On a pedestal bearing appropriate inscriptions is a statue of Mrs. Dustin, represented as holding a tomahawk in her right hand and a bunch of scalps in the other. The arms are bare to the shoulders. The right hand is raised in the attitude of striking. The hair is loose and flowing and the body is enclosed in graceful drapery. One of two inscriptions gives the names of two women and the boy as follows: "Hannah Dustin, Mary Neff, and Samuel Leonardson, March 30, 1697, Midnight."

IT MAY possibly be inferred from this digression touching the general traits of the Indian that I am not an ardent admirer of the character, manners and customs of Mr. Lo. I confess I did not intend so to be understood.

When we returned to our camp about six o'clock in the morning, all was excitement and everyone wanted to hear the news in its minutest particular and each one had to relate it to another as there was no war correspondent in our party nor a newspaper reporter on that night's battlefield. It was a day of general rejoicing in our camp and of course no traveling as we had been out all night and wanted sleep.

The captain caught a cold which resulted in a jumping toothache and he was raving and rearing mad. John See asked him why he did not have it pulled.

"How can I have it pulled?" said he. "We have no doctor; besides, it is a double tooth."

See told him we had a doctor in our party and came to me saying, "Charlie, I have a job for you."

"What is it?"

"To pull the captain's tooth."

"Why," said I, "I never pulled a tooth in my life."

"It don't matter," said John, "you have got to pull his, for I told him you were a doctor and a first-rate hand at pulling teeth, so you have got to pull his or make me out a liar."

"I might break his jaw!"

"Damn the odds," said he, "you've got to pull it, and, what is more, make him pay for it."

"What! Shall I charge five dollars?"

"Five dollars be blanked," said John, "don't charge him less than twenty. He charges us a dollar a pound for his old musty flour, and surely any doctor would charge twenty pounds of flour for pulling a tooth."

Well, John persuaded me to make the attempt. It so happened I had a pair of those old-fashioned "turnkeys" doctors formerly used which were given me by my brother in Illinois when I started. They looked more like a "canthook" used for rolling logs in a sawmill than like the instrument now used by dentists for extracting molars. In a short time the captain came in great agony holding his hand firmly against his jaw.

"Doctor," he said, "I want you to pull a tooth for me." With the gravity of a bona fide M.D. I said, "Let me look at it."

I looked at it and pronounced it a very bad one and advised him not to have it pulled. I knew he was in such agony he would have it out anyway and my advice was only a professional ruse partly to impress his mind with the certain belief that he was in the hands of an experienced and prudent surgeon but more especially for the reason that if perchance I should break his jaw or carry away a portion of his head I could plead that he had been forewarned of the danger of the operation but persisted therein against my advice.

John was standing off a short distance gesticulating for me to go ahead. So I got the captain seated on the ground with his head between my knees, got out my lance (jack-knife) and commenced chopping and digging away around the gum of the tooth. The women all ran away as soon as I commenced to mutilate the patient's mouth with the lancet. John came forward as my student and assistant and handed me the turnkeys. I got them hooked on at last, but considerable time and not a little professional skill were expended in manipulating the ponderous hook and nicely attaching it to the throbbing tooth. I then straightened myself up into a position a little more dignified and gave the instrument a slight twist just to be sure it was on firmly which made him wince so that I began to lose courage and would willingly have given up the job to the ruin of my professional standing had I not just at that moment caught the eye of John. He gave an approving nod and wink and his facial expression and gesticulations seemed to say, "Courage, boy, out with it."

I gave a final twist and jerk and out flew the tooth and struck the ground a good two yards distant. The captain jumped up and discharged a few mouthfuls of blood and assured me that he had never before in all his life had a tooth pulled so skillfully. I assured him in return that in all my professional experience I had never encountered such a tenacious and resisting molar. He expressed great satisfaction, said he felt greatly relieved. So did I. He asked how much was the charge. I again assumed the typical professional air and gravity of countenance and said twenty dollars. He handed me one of the very gold pieces we had given him for twenty pounds of musty flour and handed it over freely without haggle or complaint. Henceforth my reputation as a doctor was made. Every woman in the camp and train consulted me about her every ache and pain. The children too, they said, had been neglected; they had always lived so far away from a doctor, and now that they had one right among them they were bound to make up for past neglect.

My practice was becoming large. My consulting hours when we were traveling were after supper. Besides I had to compound many medicinal remedies. Fortunately for me, I was provided with a good stock of searching and raking pills that were sure to do their work. Then I had some calomel, but that I did not thoroughly understand so administered it very prudently and always followed it up with a dose of those never failing pills. Hence I lost not a patient from an overdose of calomel.

As my practice was increasing rapidly, it stood me in hand to be careful lest my stock of medicine would run out; and as a preventive of such possibility I used some of the flour I had bought of the captain for a dollar a pound and prescribed it in chronic cases at two dollars a prescription exclusive of my professional charge for the visit. The quinine held out well and was useful and effective in malarial regions and in cold and rainy weather.

However my practice was not wholly confined to medicine; my surgical skill as well was sought for. One Oregonian had a little lump growing on the side of his neck, a little larger than a good sized bean. I had seen my brother cut one out from the neck of a Norwegian only a short time before I left. The man came to me and I pronounced it a growing tumor. That was enough; the whole camp was talking about it. Of course I was asked how large it would grow and how long it would be about it. I shook my head and with slowness of speech and gravity of manner said that would depend on how long the dangerous thing was suffered to remain before it was cut out—which it would have to be sooner or later.

He asked what would I charge to perform the operation. I said fifty dollars. He concluded to have it done. So at the camping time he came and I pinched the skin underneath the lump, slit the skin, and out popped the little hard bean. I dressed the wound, putting on some salve and telling him to keep it bound up and be careful about his diet or it might cost him his life. That was a master stroke for me—a learned doctor with such a practice, a skillful surgeon, and only seventeen years old! It was certainly unprecedented in the canyons of the Sierra Nevada Mountains. But my professional eminence must be credited not alone to the desperate emergencies of our situation, but to John See as an advisor. He blew my horn. Vive l'humbug!

WE HAD now been in the Oregon train about two weeks. One evening a little before sundown we discovered a party of seven coming down the mountain all with pack mules. We of course took them to be emigrants. Our party again getting reduced in flour and other provisions, I went to the captain for more. He asked what we were willing to pay. Costler spoke up and told him we were willing to pay a dollar a pound as before.

"No," the captain said, "I want one and a half," for the party we saw coming were sure to be out of provisions and that was what he should charge them and he could not let us have it for less. That settled it. Costler was a high-tempered fellow and blustered considerably in his diplomacy and told the captain he was not going to be robbed—he not considering in my medical and surgical practice that I had fleeced our good Oregon friends as much as they had robbed us in unconscionable charges. In fact, considering my professional income as medical director of the train, I felt that flour at a dollar and a half a pound was moderate and reasonable.

By the time the strangers had arrived and proved to be prospectors who had been out on the west branch of the north fork of Feather River and were now on their return with plenty of provisions they did not need. When they were told the extraordinary charges we had been and were necessitated to submit to, they offered us all they had, only reserving enough to carry them through to Sacramento. They told us we were only about fifty miles from Lassen's. It elevated our spirits higher than the top of the highest mountain to think that in three days more we would be there. We could hardly realize it but so it was.

Twenty-four had started only a short time before and now only nine were alive and one of them past all hopes of recovery—soon to be dead and buried. In three days more we arrived at Lassen's ranch on the Sacramento River, about 125 miles above Sacramento City. The next morning we parted with our Oregon friends. I had a very pressing invitation to go with them and follow my profession but I declined, telling them that I had come out to try my fortune in the gold fields and if I failed in that, there would be time for me to turn again to my profession. The women thought it was a pity such a clever young doctor as I was should go digging. Before I left, the captain gave me fifty dollars for a bottle of quinine in solution—a pretty fair profit but when one comes to look at it, there was not so much profit as there was on fifty pounds of flour at the prices charged.

Costler, See and myself now started off for the nearest gold diggings which we were told were at Butte Creek about thirty-three miles distant. Our first day's travel was to Newell's ranch, twenty-five miles distant. Newell had crossed the plains with Fremont in 1848 and had started a ranch there and seemed to be in a fair way of making a fortune. He was an Irish-American and first-rate fellow. We stopped with him overnight and he gave us a great deal of information. He said there were a few parties up the creek eight miles away on Reese's Bar and some of them were doing well. Others were cutting a channel to turn the creek so they could work the bed of the stream, anticipating fortunate results therefrom.

Now we were only eight miles of where men were actually getting gold. I am unable to express our mental sensations—exultation of spirit for triumphs achieved and expectancy on the verge of realization. For over a year visions of gold fields had fairly bewildered my youthful brain and now here I was, right where in twenty-four hours I would see men digging out the golden nuggets and sifting the precious sands in the beds of the ancient rivers. I did not sleep that night nor did my two companions. We talked and planned and built castles in the air all night. But, alas! many of those fine castles were doomed to fall to the ground.

In the morning we sold our horses to Newell for seventy-five dollars a head
two ponies and the horse I bought of t
Crow Indian for a pint of well-water
brandy and a pint of sugar. In return
bought of him a ham at a dollar a pour
ten pounds of sugar, twenty pounds
flour, ten pounds of jerked beef, sor
coffee, one pick at eight dollars, and o
shovel at the same price, a tin-pan
six dollars, and two pairs of blankets
sixteen dollars a pair. When we got t
stuff packed we found we had more th
we could carry, though many times sin
I have carried more myself alone. B
we were weak and worn out so we thoug
we would try to buy Billy back. But r
he would not sell him but offered to le
him to us to take our things up, tellir
us we would soon want more stuff a
that we need not be in a hurry to retu
him; that if we stopped with him
could always have a horse to take o
provisions to the mines.

We started at last, thinking New
was the best fellow we ever met a
I never had any occasion to think othe
wise. It was about seven o'clock in t
morning. Our hearts were full of hop
and fond expectations. We traveled up t
creek about four miles and had ju
entered where the stream commenced
canyon the banks, which were so thi
with a growth of scrub we could hard[illegible]
see through to the stream. We hea
men talking, stones rattling, and t
sound of picks. We listened and at leng
ventured into the scrub, and lookir
through saw men working, talking a
laughing. We stood for some minut
with beating hearts. We had at lea
seen with our own eyes what we had
long wished for and for which we h
crossed the continent. Men actually di
ging for gold!

We stood and conversed in whisper
Finally we mustered up courage a
went through the scrubs to them wh
they saluted us with, "Good day, Ca
tains, where from?"

We told them we had arrived fro
across the plains only the day before a
had never seen any gold fields. They
once invited us to their camp, which w
on the opposite side of the creek fro
where our pony was, one man going wi
John See to show him a crossing, Mar
Costler and myself going with the oth
three to camp. Dinner was soon on t
way. We had to give them all the ne
and a full account of our journey, whi
they listened to with the greatest
terest. They had come around the Ho

THERE WAS NO work for them th
afternoon. They would not hear
our going any farther that day a
would not allow us to cook any of c
provisions. That night they told us th
were prospecting the creek by putting
what is called a wing dam and if
liked we could go to work with them a
all share alike.

We accepted their proposition and
next morning went to work putting
the wing dam, which is constructed
building a wall of stone diagonally ab
half way across the stream, then fill
in with earth to dam the water back a
throw the current to the opposite si
then in like manner down the strea
When this is accomplished, the river
within the enclosure is accessible fr
the surface to the bed-rock. The dirt
then tried from top to bottom with a
pan, or gold dish as it is called amo
miners. Sometimes gold is obtained
through the dirt, but generally the ri
est is found at the bottom.

ell, we worked two days and sunk
le to the bed-rock without obtaining
sfactory results—that is so the par-
we were working with said. Our
its went down about ten degrees be-
zero and we made up our minds to
and go farther up the stream to a
e called Reese's Bar. They told us
must not get discouraged at not drop-
on it at once; that we might have
ry without success for a long time,
ecially as we were beginners; that
-digging was a trade that one had to
n the same way as any other, but
if we went to Reese's Bar we were
to get gold there in the side of the
but that we could do nothing without
radle. What we wanted a cradle for
more than any of us could tell—we
no children to rock. However, we
ted the next morning—rather down
he mouth, especially Costler, though
n seemed to take it a little better. It
four miles up the creek and on rather
ugh road. Some twenty or thirty men
e working there and had cut a race,
sted the rock, dug out a new channel
the creek, built a dam across the
am and turned it into the race or
channel to enable them to work the
ginal bottom of the stream.

Ve found the men here equally as
itable and friendly as the party be-
Dinner we must have with them and
xcuse was admissible. After dinner
of them showed us where we could
in and make wages. It was in the
of a hill digging up the surface,
ss, roots and all, and carrying it on
backs some fifty or more yards to
stream to wash. He showed us how
vash in a tin dish but told us we would
e to have a cradle—there again came
that mysterious and to us useless cradle. I told him I did not need a cradle; that I was an unmarried man of reputable character and therefore could not be the father of children; that I had not even been courting any young lady in the East. He laughed heartily at my simplicity and explained to us the form and use of what the miners call a cradle or rocker.

It is a box about three feet and a half long, the bottom about sixteen inches wide, its sides about the same height, the upper half having a strip or riffle across the bottom about an inch thick and one on the lower end. The top is a hopper about sixteen inches square with a sheet iron screen full of holes punched about an inch apart and about half an inch in diameter. Underneath the hopper is a canvas apron fixed on a slide set so as to pitch back to the upper side or back end of the cradle at an angle of about fifteen degrees. Underneath the cradle are attached two rockers like a child's cradle with two little iron spikes, and also a strip with two holes in the center for the spikes and on the back end is a handle to rock the cradle. It is set on an incline toward the tail of the lower end, of about an inch to the foot—now you are ready for rocking out the gold.

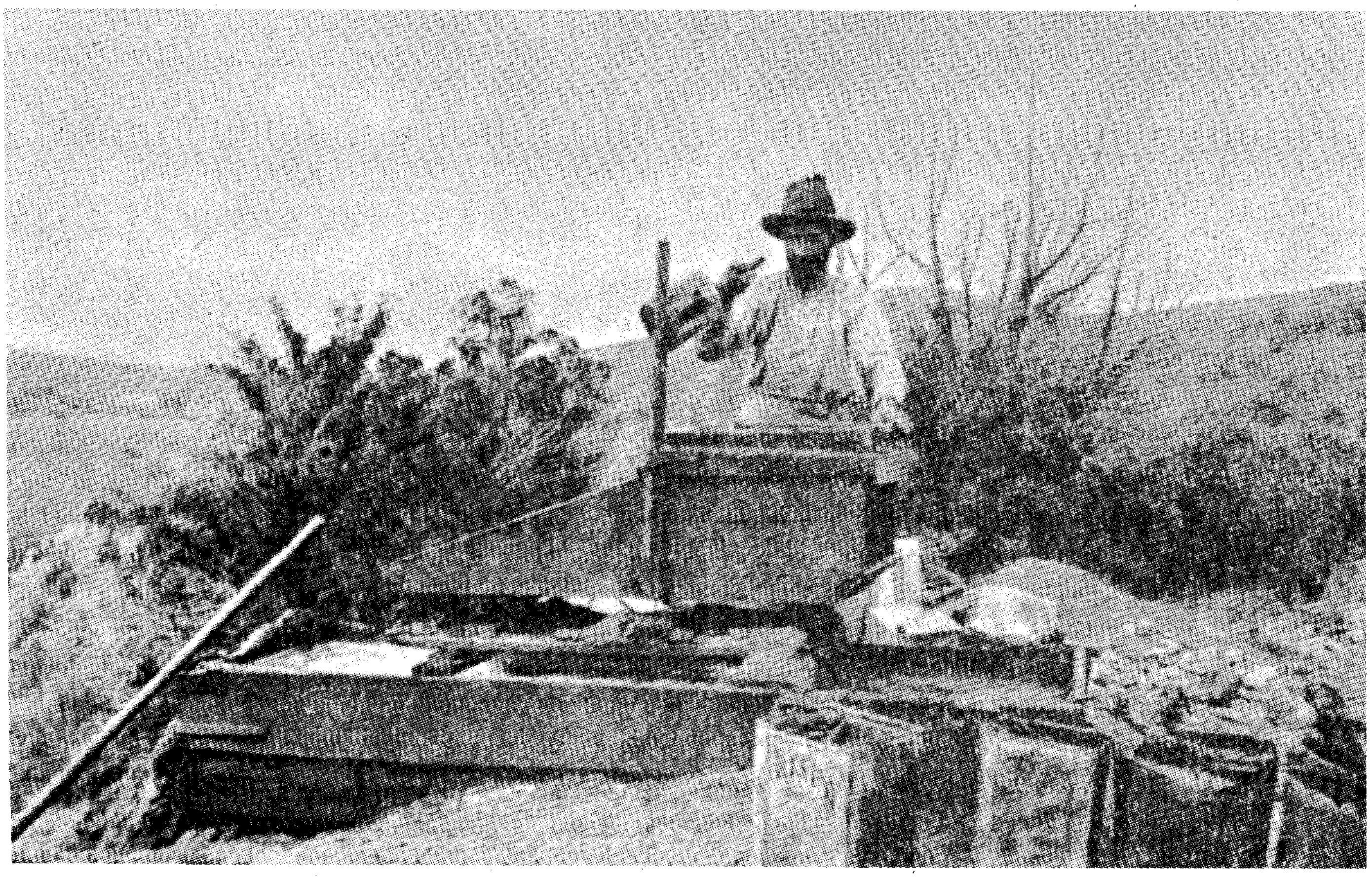
The process is to put into the hopper about a half a bucket of dirt, having a dipper holding a quart of water, commence rocking the cradle steadily, at the same time pouring in the water regularly so as to have a steady stream running off. One has to learn to do three things at once—rock, dip and pour—which is difficult at first to do as all boys know who have experimented on only two simultaneous acts—scratching the head with one hand and patting the chest with the other.

Our new friend told us he had a cradle he was not using which he would lend us until he wanted to use it himself, which was very kind of him especially as one was worth about forty dollars. He brought it and set it for us, panned out two or three dishes of dirt, told us we had a first-rate prospect, and then had me try my hand. I made a very poor hand at it. I found I could not even do two things at once—could not rock and dip at the same time. The others then tried it but did no better and perhaps not quite so well as I did; so I was tolled off to rock the cradle. See carried down the dirt in a fifty pound flour sack and Costler dug up the surface and picked out the coarse stone. When our friend got us to working all right he left, telling us to call him when we wanted to clean out the rocker.

We commenced work at half past two o'clock but in two hours Costler gave out—he could stand it no longer—and as for myself, if he had not stopped as he did I should have ceased rocking for I was completely played out. We called our new friend who came and cleaned up for us, we all the while looking on with the greatest anxiety. When he got it panned down my spirits dropped; still he kept panning out the sand until I thought he was going to pan it all away. At last he got through and there looked to me to be a very small amount of precious settlings for so much work. He told us that it was first-rate; that if he had thought that it had been anywhere near so good he would have worked it himself. That rather frightened us; perhaps he would take the cradle away from us. However, he took the little results of our rockings down to his camp, dried it, and put in into a blower to blow out the sand. Now I was sure it was all

Reese's Bar on Butte Creek, south of today's Lassen Volcanic National Park in the northern Sierra Nevadas, the author with Martin stler and John See panned their very first gold—$119 the first two days—using a cradle or rocker like the one being worked by the miner below.

Courtesy California State Library



gone for he kept blowing and shaking and blowing again until I thought the last particle was bound to go. He then poured it into his gold scales and weighed it. Judge our surprise when he told us that there were just two ounces, two and a half pennyweights, or thirty-five dollars worth. We could hardly believe him and yet felt that our fortunes were secured. See wanted to go to work again that afternoon but poor Costler was too much worn out and I was not much better.

THE NEXT DAY we were at it bright and early, but all fagged and often had to stop and rest and by the middle of the afternoon we shut down. Our friend showed us how to clean out the cradle every hour and leave the dirt in the dish, and at noon came out and panned it off for us. That day we had five ounces or eighty-four dollars.

The next morning Costler was as crazy as a loon—the mountain fever had attacked him. What to do we did not know. I had medicine but when it came to practicing on a friend that was really sick it was a different thing from practicing on my Oregon patients who needed not a physician. But the poor fellow had to have something and so I tried to do the best I could.

I began by giving a whopping dose of calomel followed up with a large dose of pills; then quinine came in, but nothing seemed to quiet his brain or check his fever. He raved and talked all sorts of nonsense—sometimes he was fighting Indians and one of us had to stay with him constantly. I kept repeating my routine of prescriptions not knowing whether I was doing right or wrong. After six days I could stand it no longer and, having been told that there was a doctor about ten miles away, I left See with him and went to see the doctor, found him, stated the case and what I had done. He listened to me in profound silence and with closed eyes as though he was taking a mental review of all the cases in the book from Esculpaius or Galen down to that hour. Finally he opened his eyes, coughed, cleared his throat, and with a grave and sedate countenance told me that the course of treatment I had pursued was the correct one, that in his opinion it was a very stubborn and doubtful case; that if he went to see him his charge would be $100; that he was just as well satisfied with my diagnosis as if he had seen the patient; that he should treat him the same as I had. I asked him his fee for the consultation. He said, "O, nothing at all, perhaps he should sometime have a stubborn case and need my counsel."

That settled it with me; I knew then he was an imposter. I then went to the store there and bought a bottle of brandy for which I paid sixteen dollars and then started back as fast as Billy could carry me. And I did not get back any too soon. Costler's fever had broken and he had a sinking spell. We both thought he was going to die and very soon. I thought to try the brandy and got some mixed with water down him when he revived. One of us stayed with him all the time, never leaving him, every now and then giving him a spoonful of the brandy and water and quinine in grain doses every three hours. The men on the bar were very kind and sat up with him nights and were willing to do anything for him. At last he began to recover so that I could leave him. I now began to feel uneasy about keeping Billy so long and went down to Newell's to apologize and explain. He said he had heard that there was a man on the bar that could not live, but that he had one of the cleverest young doctors attending him. Upon my inquiry as to who told him, he said it was Dr. Bliss from the Springs, the same old humbug I had been to see.

I bought Billy back for $100, twenty-five more than I sold him for. I found we must have a horse and that Billy would suit us better than any other we could get. I bought more provisions and returned. See was forking away, but Costler was nowhere to be found. I called to See to know what had become of him. He told he had just left Costler, that he worked a little while and then went to see if he wanted anything and then returned to work again. We looked everywhere and called for him but no answer. We began to think he had crawled to the dam and had fallen in. There was a deep gorge close by and a spring of ice-cold water in it and as one of us was running past it a noise was heard, and looking around, there lay Costler by the spring with nothing on but his shirt. He was sticking his head in the water and then shaking it like a Newfoundland dog.

We carried him back; he had become so emaciated that one could carry him like a child. He had got a relapse and was as bad as ever. I gave up all hopes of saving him but was determined to try. I treated much as before only in smaller doses. I got some arrow-root at Newell's, but he would not take it, accused me of trying to poison him, called me everything that was bad, and although a very religious man, swore at us like a pirate. We had an awfully trying time with him; but at last he began to recover and after about three weeks got so we could leave him and both go to work. We still continued to do pretty well at the cradle and had we been able to do a full day's work, we would have made from forty to fifty dollars a day. Soon Costler got so he could get around but was so cross that he was very disagreeable. He got it into his head that we must get out of that place. See and I opposed it but that did not satisfy him; go we should, and finally to gratify his whim we consented to go across to Feather River, a distance of about thirty-five miles.

We packed up Billy, offered to pay for the use of the cradle, thanked the party for their kindness, and departed for the main fork of the Feather River. Costler was not equal to the journey and before we had gone four miles we had to load him onto the horse. He rode ten miles to the springs where I consulted the doctor and there we had to lay over with him three days and at last reached Long's Bar. See and I prospected around for three or four days and thought we would set in on Morris' ravine about a mile and a half distant. Costler went over with us; but no, that place did not suit him and he wasn't going to stop there. To be sure it was not so good as the place we had left, but it was better to stop there than to be running around. No, he wanted to go to Sacramento and us to go with him. See, I think, would have gone if I had not told him I had lost time enough in running around and did not intend to lose any more, he could do as he liked.

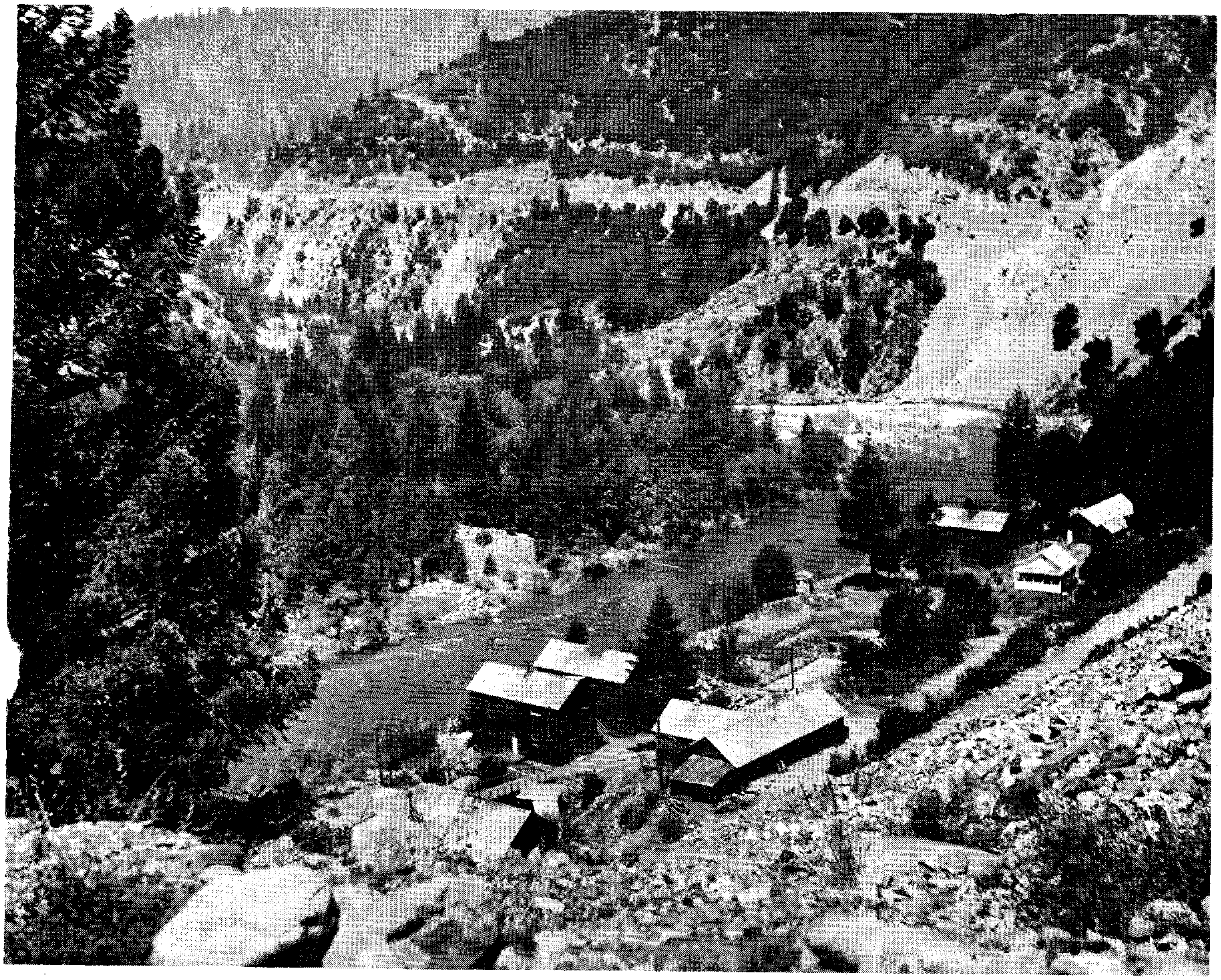
Costler was a carpenter by trade and said he knew he could make more money down there than he could digging, so we told him to go and we sold Billy for $150, divided up every dollar we had made, and he left us. I never saw him again for two years, when I met him in Nevada City. He told me he had been on the run from one place to another ever since.

AFTER COSTLER left us, See ar
continued to work on Morris' ra
with varied success. The gold
nuggety—some days we would get n
ing—then the sinking was some si
seven feet. To strip a "paddock," as
called (a hole), one would dig down se
or eight feet and perhaps get nothi
then again one might get three or
nuggets running in weight from on
four ounces and some small or fine g
In Morris' ravine one depended wh
upon the nuggets he might get.
worked there some time when See
suddenly homesick and go home he n
and did. He would have about $1,000 w
he got back—that was all he wante
said—that would finish up paying
his farm. He had a wife and one c
and he could make a living for t
when he had his farm paid for, so
departed.

That left me alone and lones
enough I was. One night I went ove
Long's Bar for some groceries and m
for there was a regular butcher's sh
bles. The butcher's name was Jerre A
strong from near Morris, Illinois and
persuaded me to come to the bar and
my luck in a wing-dam. He offered m
half share. I thought it a good offer
did everyone that I talked with, and
I came. Board was twenty-one dolla
week and I went to work on Long's
wing-dam. The third day a man
along and hired out for sixteen dol
a day. No one knew who he was or w
he came from. He was carrying
stone with me with a hand-barrow
just as he had discharged his load
stepped on a stone and turned and
into the stream. The current was s
and it carried him down until he str
the eddy, when he suddenly turned o
threw up his hands and sank and t
was the last ever seen of him. So it
been with hundreds of men who h
gone to California, met with some a
dent, and being unknown, their frie
could not be written to; they died am
strangers and were soon forgotten.

When we had worked about four we
on the dam and had got nearly read
rock the golden dirt, a flood came
disastrous to our hopes as Noah's wa
the ancient world and swept everyt
away. I made up my mind that woul
the last wing-dam or any other kin
a dam, that I would invest in in Cali
nia. At that time there was a craze
river damming. There was one just
low Long's and another, the White
Company's, where the dam and cut
to turn the river cost over $100,000
season and they did not even get
the river. Besides at every turn or
in the stream there was a company w
damming.

In my opinion there was not one d
got out of the river where ten dol
were put in. There was a good clas
people there—that is, the majority
there are always exceptions and Long
was not without its exceptions. On
other side of the river from Long's
a Mr. Adams and his wife from Qui
Illinois. I shall never forget that l
she was like a sister to me. I was y
and she knew the temptations that
placed in the way of a boy of my
thrown among gamblers, inexperien
and no one to advise him, so she to
upon herself to do so and very than
I am for it. She was the only woma
that side of the river and I think t
were none on the other side. The
Armstrong brothers were engaged in
butchering business. They were



Courtesy Title Insurance and Trust Company, Los Angeles

ı **Bar on the north fork of Feather River. Ferguson and some friends creviced for gold here for several unprofitable weeks. Most of the buildings shown *probably are of later vintage.***

:hers to me for the short time I was :e.

he *Armstrongs* used to bring up le from the Sacramento flat in droves ı dozen or twenty at a time and herd n down by a little bend in the river : was perfectly hemmed in by high 's of rocks so it was impossible for n to get out except by the way they e brought in. The enclosure embraced ıt ten acres. One Sunday afternoon 'e Armstrong took his minie rifle on shoulder and a pail of salt and went n to salt his cattle. After about two rs he returned and lay down on his k. He looked very pale and I asked if he was sick.

No," he said. "Why do you ask?"

told him that he was as white as a st and he was all of a shake. He said ıad been nearly frightened to death. he went down to count the cattle salt them and then started for home as he was walking toward the en-ce of the enclosure he heard some-g walking behind him. He paid no ntion to it when suddenly he felt a ible blow on the shoulder that knocked forward three or four feet, and a ible growl. Looking back over his ılder there was a grizzly bear making him with *mouth* wide open. He said ɔelieved he let out one of the most ırthly yells that ever came from a an being, at the same moment giving a backhanded blow with his rifle which struck the bear full in the mouth; then ran to the top of a hill about ten yards distant and fell. As he fell he turned to look for the bear, expecting the next instant to be chewed into mincemeat. To his surprise and joy the bear was down on the bottom and making the best of leg-bail in his power. I examined his rifle and there were prints and scratches on the barrel where it had come in contact with the grizzly's teeth. It was an exciting theme of talk in the neighborhood for many a day. The grizzly is as great a terror in California as the tiger is in Hindustan.

RICH BAR on the west branch of the north fork of Feather River just to the east of where we fell in with the Oregon party was the location of the prospecting party before mentioned that gave us their surplus of provisions. There had been some very rich findings and many were going there. The Armstrong brothers wanted me to go, as one of them was going while the other remained to manage their business. They had plenty of horses so I agreed to go with Isaiah, the younger of the brothers, and another young fellow, Horace King from Illinois. We started in company with three more for it was reported that the Indians were troublesome and it was not safe to go in small parties.

Nelson's Creek was the first stream to cross. We camped one night in the mountains above the north fork on a piece of marshy ground where there were patches of scrub. In the morning our horses were gone. King and I went in search of them. After a little we separated and took different routes. Not long after I struck the trail of the horses making down toward the camp. I was crossing over a sandy place when all at once I heard something "zit" past close to my head. Soon another "zit." I did not have to think twice to make up my *mind* what it was. As it is sometimes expressed, I did not run but did some pretty tall walking. I did not look back but before I reached a little rise of ground or spur of a hill, five of those "zits" had sounded at regular intervals in my ear.

As I reached the rise which was not more than thirty yards I saw a large boulder that had rolled down from a higher level. I jumped to the top of it and suddenly turned around just in time to see nothing but a bunch of long grass move a little. I upped gun and fired into the center of the bunch and left for camp. The boys had heard my shooting and inquired what I had been shooting at. I told them a bunch of grass.

"Did you kill it?"

I said I did not go to look. We talked about that bunch of grass until there seemed to be a mysterious fascination in the subject and all had a desire to inspect it a little closer, so we all went together, taking our guns with us. Arriving at the spot we were all surprised to find an Indian stretched out at full length, fast asleep as we supposed, but on closer inspection we found he had a little bullet hole through him just under his armpits. He was taking his last sleep.

We went on up to Rich Bar and found many diggings there. It was all crevicing—that is, working in crevices in the rocks. Some had made an immense pile in a few weeks. I met the party there who had given us the provisions while we were with the Oregon party. They had all done well. There were no claims but every man started out in the morning with his crowbar, iron spoon and tin dish and looked for a crevice to work out. Some of them had many pounds of gold. One man obtained as much as a pint cup full in one day, which I had observation of myself. We stayed there two or three weeks and prospected around in different canyons with a little success; but on the whole it was not a paying trip and we soon got tired.

Armstrong wanted to go back to Long's Bar to his butchering business and the rest of us were quite willing too. So we departed, stopping on our way back to prospect on Nelson's Creek for a week but we met with nothing encouraging. We never went out without our guns or revolvers as we were liable at any moment to meet the infernal redskins. One day I was looking for the horses and came across some acorns, the largest I ever saw, and gathered a few specimens to show the boys in camp. As I had them in hand, intently looking at them, I was wholly oblivious of anyone near me, but as I raised my eyes to start I saw two Indians directly facing me within forty feet with their bows drawn and the arrows just ready to fly. Selkirk was inspired by loneliness when he was supposed to have said:

"How fleet is a glance of the mind!
Compared with the speed of its flight
The tempest itself lags behind,
And the swift winged arrows of light.
When I think of my own native land,
In a moment I seem to be there;
But alas! recollection at hand
Soon hurries me back to despair."

NEVER until that moment did I appreciate those lines. I thought of my mother, my home, every act of my childhood; everything I had done in life up to that moment flashed across my mind in rapidly successive installments. Instinctively and without reflection caused by the startling realities of the moment, I flirted rather than threw the acorns in their faces. The act was a surprise to them and caused them to wince and their arrows, which were sent at the same instant, to miss their mark. Now was my opportunity and I availed myself of it. Before they could put their hands over their shoulder and draw another arrow from the quiver, I had my revolver and in an instant there were two more redskins ready for the tanyard, but whose hides were too badly damaged to command full price.

Our Nelson Creek prospecting proved as unprofitable as our Rich Bar had, so we came to the conclusion to return to Long's Bar again. Shortly after our arrival, being in Adams' store one evening, I met a newly arrived party, one of whom after eyeing me for a time asked me if I did not know him. He said he was Charlie Young from Young's Mill, Farmington, Ohio. For the moment I was so confused I could remember nothing although I knew him well. When my sense came back to me I felt exceeding delight for he was the first person I had yet seen since I left home whom I had known before. He told me his father and John Proctor, another Farmington boy, were up on Middle Fork four miles above Bidwell's Bar, twelve miles from where we then were, and the next day I went up to see them.

Bidwell's Bar was on the main Feather River eight miles above Long's Bar. Two miles above Bidwell's the river forked, one branch forming the south, the other the middle fork of the Feather River. Up the middle two miles is, or was, Miller's Bar and here I found Elisha Young and John Proctor, two old Farmington acquaintances from my early childhood.

This meeting in that far-distant, rocky, craggy region of the Sierra Nevada Mountains was naturally joyous. One who has been there and been fortunate enough to meet one of his early friends or acquaintances can appreciate such a meeting. I was fortunate enough for it is one of the best events in a young man's life so situated who has any pride and self-respect to meet occasionally with early companions and especially those from home. It has a tendency to keep him steady for nothing is more dreaded by a young man than to have a report go back to his early friends and childhood home that he has gone to the bad. I have known many that had become reckless and had gone down, brought back by falling in with one of the right kind; otherwise they both go down, cursing their luck, as all miners choose
to call their misfortunes or ill su
when ninety-nine times in a hundre
is their own fault.

Young and Proctor were workin
Miller's Bar, washing the sand that
been thrown up among the boulders
making good wages. They proposed
I should go to work with them, whi
did, but after all they were disincl
to remain there and were consta
talking of what could be done in Ma
ville in the milk business. They wa
to go down there and buy cows and
milk and at last they got me equ
interested in their scheme.

We finally sent Proctor to see
could be done and Young and I suspe
work till his return, having become
thoroughly enthused in the milk pr
to even dig gold. After a week he
turned and great was the accoun
gave us of what could be done in
in Marysville. Like Colonel Seller's
water, there was "millions in it." So
to Marysville about forty miles dis
we went. As I had some things at Lo
Bar, Mr. Adams and his wife, who
have already mentioned, endeavore
persuade me out of the milk busi
offering me $200 a month to work
them. They were running a store
the Bar and her brother had a f
horse team on the road between there
Sacramento. They would put on an
team for me to drive.

They were so solicitous for my
fare and so generous in their propo
that I partly or rather condition
promised to accept. The brother had
morning started for Sacramento and
to stop at a ranch a day and I wa
start at once and overtake him. We
to buy the team in Sacramento and I
to drive it back if, after I had seen Yo
and Proctor, they would let me of
overtook the brother who was also
ious for me to go right on with him,
I felt under obligation of honor to
Young and Proctor first, and there
I went on to Marysville and found t

They had arrived there before me
I found Young already dissatisfied.
claimed that Proctor's imagination
too brilliant and his colors too gaudy
a rural picture of cows, cans and
maids. The end of the milk busin
Young wanted me to return with hi
Miller's Bar. While I was now i
quandary as to whether I ought t
back to the Bar with Young or g
to Sacramento in the teaming e
prise, a circumstance occurred
changed all my previous plans and
ably all my after life.

(Concluded in the next issue of OLD WEST.)

TUMBLEWEEDS
—by Tom K. Ryan
TRYING TO SNEAK UP BEHIND ME, EH?
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THEN, WHY WERE YOU ABOUT TO HIT ME WITH YOUR TOMAHAWK?
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4-16
T.K.RYAN

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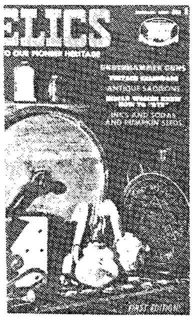

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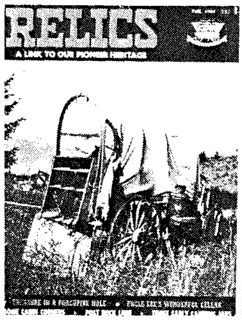

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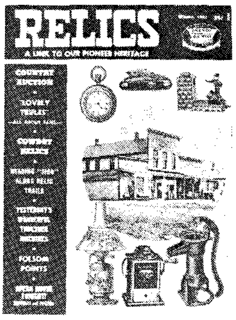

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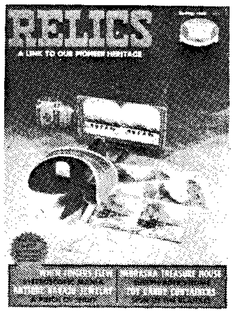

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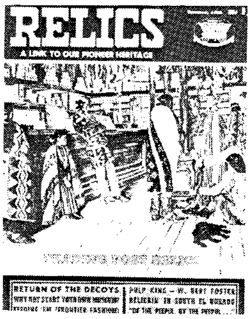

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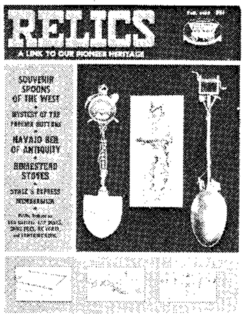

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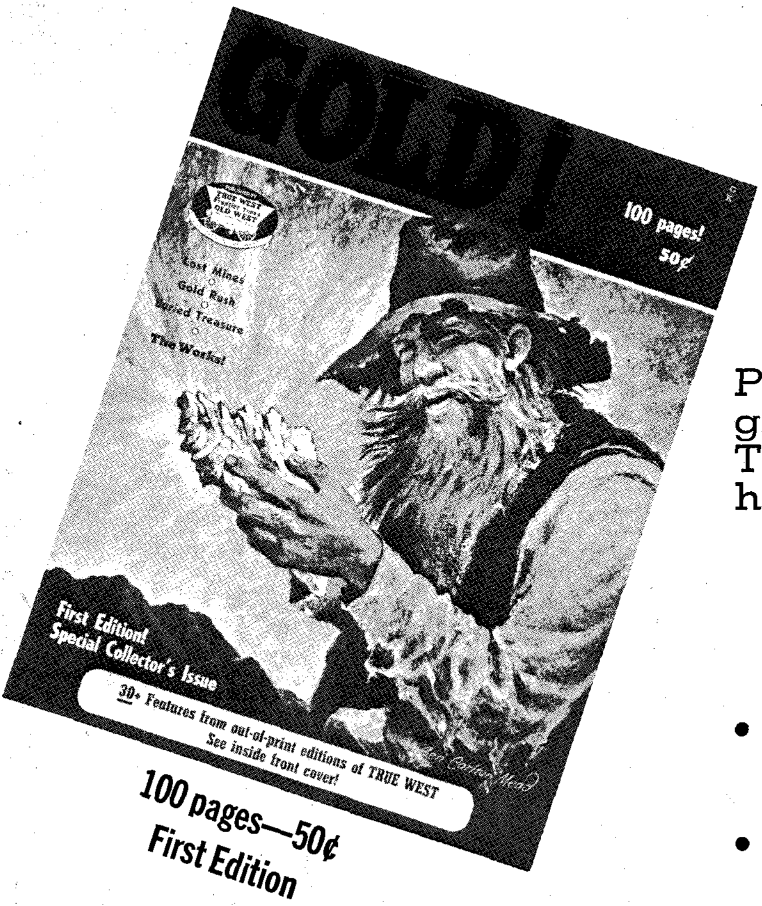

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